

COMIC DIALOGUES

for Boys and Girls

PN 4251

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COMIC DIALOGUES

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

*For Schools, Sunday Schools and
All Juvenile Entertainments*

A New Compilation of Chosen Favorites
for Young People

BY

CARLETON B. CASE

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PREFACE.

There isn't a tedious dialogue in this collection. Young folks, for whose use this material is specially designed, will appreciate that fact, and will likewise be gratified at the jollity, the wit and humor, that prevail throughout the little dramas here presented.

There is an ever increasing call for this class of juvenile dialogues, and great pains has been taken to secure in this volume a selection that shall supply the insistent demand.

In every class of juvenile entertainment, whether in school, church or home, this work will be able to demonstrate its availability.

The nonrequirement of elaborate stage setting, special costumes and difficult properties, will be noted and approved.

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A WORD TO TEACHERS

Use special care in the assignment of parts. You know your pupils; choose those best adapted to portray the several characters to be delineated.

Be sure that all are perfect in their lines before the dialogue is given public presentation. Coach freely at the private rehearsals, as to gesture, action, voice, emphasis, inflection, articulation, position and disposition of hands and feet, movement about stage, how to enter and exit, facing and addressing audience, and every detail that makes for a perfect performance. Be elocutionist, stage manager and property man as well as teacher. Remember that in all likelihood your young actors have everything to learn about stage matters and are dependent upon you to instruct them.

Have at least two dress rehearsals, and more if needed. That means rehearsal in full costume, and with all properties, entrances and exits definitely arranged, everything as it will be at the public performance.

We will not remind you to be patient; that's part of your regular business!

A WORD TO THE AMATEUR PERFORMER

Learn every word of your part thoroughly, and as much of the parts of others who are "on" with you as will aid you in coming in with your lines at the right place. In other words, learn your "cues" as well as your lines. If your opposite in a dialogue makes a bungle of your cue, be prepared to speak your lines at the correct place, regardless of that. Keep your head and don't get rattled.

Learn to face your audience, to speak toward them, and not to turn your back on them, even to exit.

Learn where you are to come on stage (your entrance), and where to go off (your exit). There is always one right place for this; have it definitely fixed before the performance.

Wherever it reads "Ha! Ha!" in a dialogue, it means that you are to laugh naturally. The poor writer has no other word to express a laugh; but don't you say "Ha! Ha!" Laugh, and keep on laughing, in your practice at home till you can do it as naturally as though you were "tickled to death."

Speak distinctly, articulating your words plainly, and gage your voice to reach to the far end of the room without becoming loud or boisterous.

In all matters of stage action, as well as of voice and gesture, be guided by your instructor. Presumably he knows more about these things than you do.

Briefly, learn your part perfectly, and then do as the stage manager tells you to.

COMIC DIALOGUES

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

NEWSPAPER PERPLEXITIES

CHARACTERS

JOHN SANSSCRIPT, *Husband.*

MARY SANSSCRIPT, *Wife.*

SCENE.—*A sitting-room—Mr. Sanscript lying upon a lounge, Mrs. Sanscript reading a paper.*

Mrs. Sanscript. John, I've been reading the paper.

Sanscript. That's nothin'. I've seen people before who read newspapers.

Mrs. S. Yes; but there are several things in the paper I can't understand.

Sanscript. Then don't read 'em.

Mrs. S. What do they mean by the strike, John! What is a strike, anyhow?

Sanscript. A strike is where they have struck.

Mrs. S. I don't grasp your meaning exactly. Now these strikers have stopped all the railroad-trains in the country. Why did they do it?

Sanscript. To prevent 'em from running.

Mrs. S. Yes, but why didn't they want trains to run?

Sanscript. Because they wanted more money for running them?

Mrs. S. Do they pay more for stopping trains than for running them?

Sanscript. No, you stupid woman!

Mrs. S. Then why in the world did they stop 'em? why didn't they run more of 'em, or run 'em faster? Seems to me that would pay better.

Sanscript. Mary Ann, you will never surround the problem.

Mrs. S. Maybe not, John. Some things are gotten up purposely to bother women. Now here is a column headed "Base-Ball." What is base-ball, John?

Sanscript. Don't you know what base-ball is? Happy woman! you have not lived in vain.

Mrs. S. Here it says that "The Trolley-dodgers could not collar Mathewson's curves." What under the sun are "Trolley-dodgers," and "Mathewson's curves," and why should anyone wish to "collar" them?

Sanscript. My dear, "Trolley-dodgers" is the vernacular for the Brooklyn base-ball club, and the "curves" are the way Mathewson delivers the ball.

Mrs. S. Is the ball chained?

Sanscript. No, you booby!

Mrs. S. Then how does he deliver it?

Sanscript. I mean, pitches it.

Mrs. S. Oh! Now here it says Jones muffed a ball after a hard run. What was a ball doing after a hard run?

Sanscript. Hadn't you better confine your research to the obituary and marriage columns, Mary, with an occasional advertisement thrown in to vary the monotony?

Mrs. S. Yes, but, John, I want to know! There's Mrs. Racket, over the way, who goes to all the base-ball games, and comes home to talk me blind about "fly-fouls," "base-hits," "sky-scraper," and all those things. For heaven's sake, John, what is a sky-scraper?

Sanscript. Compose yourself, old woman, you are treading on dangerous ground; your feet are on slippery rocks, while raging billows roll beneath.

Mrs. S. Mercy on me! What do you mean?

Sanscript. I mean, my dear madam, that whenever a woman begins to pry about among three-strikes, fair-

balls, base-hits, daisy-cutters, home-runs, and kindred subjects, she's in danger of being lost.

Mrs. S. Well, I confess I'm completely lost to know what this newspaper means when it says that Doyle stole a base, while the spectators applauded. Have we come to such a pass that society will applaud a theft? Why was not Doyle arrested? Now here's Wagner put out by Cobb, assisted by Jennings, and I can't see that he did anything wrong, either. Jemima Christopher! Here it says that Murphy flew out. Does that mean that they use aeroplanes in playing base-ball, now? Flew out of what? Out of the ball park, I suppose. What did he do that for? Why didn't he stay and finish the game? I don't believe a word of it, John, so there. What makes these newspaper men lie so horribly?

(*Mr. Sanscript snores, sound asleep.*)

CURTAIN.

IN A BACKWOODS SCHOOL

CHARACTERS

TEACHER,	
JOHN JONES,	} <i>Pupils.</i>
SAM WALKER,	
BILL SMITH,	
JAKE HICKS,	
JOE BLOBBS,	
JIM BARNES,	
SOLOMON NORTH,	

SCENE.—*A schoolroom. Boys seated around.*

Teacher. I tell yer, boys, you've got to stop yer noise over there, or I'll take some of you out and give yer a lammin'.

John. Wall, it warn't me that was a makin' the noise. Bill Smith he axed me if I was goin' to be de-

molished by Jake Hicks—you see Jake's been a threaten' me—and I told him I warn't, not by a jugful, and Jake hit me over the head, and I proceeded to bruise his nose. I warn't goin' to be imposed upon, you know.

Teacher. And who was it that laughed and whistled?

Jake. Why, that was Bill Smith. When we got to hittin', Bill he got to laughin'. I think you ought to give him a slashin'.

Teacher. I do not want you to tell me who I must whip, and who I must not whip. I am boss in that matter. I have been keepin' school fur the last ten years, and I calkerlate I know my business.

John. Yes, sir, you do. I think you are a tip-top master. Jack Wright was sayin', a few days ago, that you warn't of no account, but I stood up fur you and said as how you were the best master that had ever taught in the Frog Hollow school-house.

Teacher. That was right, John. Allers stand up fur your master, and your master will stand up fur you.

Jake. Well, you don't know much, anyhow. Pete Morgan says his little boy Sam knows more'n you do.

Teacher. Stop, sir! No impudence, or I'll lam you within an inch of your life. We will now have some doins of a permiscuous kind. Daniel Hodges is a comin' here to visit the school, and as he is a committee man, I want yer to show off and be smart when he is here. I'd rather the meddlesome old man would stay at home—I don't see no use in committee men comin' to see the school, but as he has decided to come, I s'pose we'll have to do our best. John Jones, tell me how many kinds of cipherin' there is in the cipherin' book?

John. There is three kinds, I guess—addition, subtraction, and multiplication.

Bill. There's four kinds—addition, subtraction, multiplication, and fractions.

Teacher. Shut up, Bill. John says there's three

kinds of cipherin', and he knows. I know, too, and I say there's only three.

Bill (aside). He's an old puddin'-head.

Teacher. I've been teachin' school fur the last ten years.

Bill (aside). And you ain't much of a teacher yet.

Teacher. And I think I understand my business. Jake Hicks, what is the capital of Ohier?

Jake. I don't think it's got any capital now.

Teacher. Yes, it has. John Jones, we'll have to fall back on you.

Jake. Don't fall hard, or you might scrunch him.

Teacher. Shut up, Jake. John, what is the capital of Ohier?

John. Philadelphia.

Teacher. That's right. If it warn't for you the school wouldn't make much of a show when Daniel Hodges comes. Now, Sam Walker, you may read some.

Sam (rises and reads). "And they took two mules and rode into—into Je-ju-je-ju." Master, I don't know this big word.

Teacher. Spell it! spell it!

Sam. J-e je, r-u ru, s-a sa, l-e-m lem. J-e je, r-u ru, s-a sa—

Teacher. Pronounce it, you dunce.

Sam. I can't 'nounce it.

Teacher. Let me see the word. (*Takes the book and attempts to spell the word.*) J-e je, r-u ru, je ru, that's a Latin word—skip it and go on. (*Hands the book to Sam.*)

Joe (laughs). Ho! ho!

Bill. Ha! ha!

Jake. He! He!

Teacher. Stop yer laughin', or I'll thrash half a dozen of you. Sam Walker, go on with your readin'.

Sam. I don't keer much about readin'. I've got the toothache awful bad.

Teacher. Take yer seat, then. (*Sam sits down.*)

Jim. Master, ain't you goin' to give me a chance to show myself?

Teacher. What can you do?

Jim. I can spell mighty well.

Teacher. But you can't pronounce.

Jim. Just try me a spell, and see if I can't.

Teacher. Well, you may spell *sugar*.

Jim (spells). S-u-g-a-r. (*Pronounces.*) Bushes.

Joe. Ho! ho!

Bill. Ha! ha!

Jake. He! he!

Teacher. Stop your laughin' Jim, you are a thick-headed boy. S-u-g-a-r doesn't spell *bushes*. You'd make a purty show.

Jim. Try me again, master.

Teacher. Spell *cow*.

Jim (spells). C-o-w. (*Pronounces.*) Elephant.

Teacher. Sit down.

Jim. Well, if I can't git a chance to show myself, I'll go home.

Teacher. Go, then; nobody cares. (*Jim goes out, stamping loudly, and whistling.*)

Solomon. What am I goin' to do when that feller comes?

Teacher. You can't do nothin'. If you can keep your mouth closed and your feet still, it will be enough fur you.

John. Master, Sol is purty good at speakin' pieces. Better let him speak somethin'.

Teacher. Well, I will allow him to speak if you say so. Sol, what can you speak?

Sol. Oh, I can speak 'most anything.

Teacher. Well, git up and speak, and speak loud. I don't want any mumblin'.

Sol. I ain't a mumblin'. (*Comes out and speaks in a loud tone.*)

You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage;

You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage;
You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage;
You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage.

Teacher. Stop! Don't you know any more of your speech?

Sol. I'm speakin' my speech, ain't I?

You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage;
You'd scarce expect one of my age
To speak in public on the stage.

Teacher (going toward *Sol*, with a whip in his hand). Get out of this. (*Sol* rushes out, repeating the lines.)

John (looking out of the window). Gracious! There's Hodges comin' now!

Teacher. Comin' now? Thunder! Why, we ain't ready for him yet. You may all run out; school is dismissed for to-day. Hodges ain't a goin' to ketch me that way. (*The boys run out, making a loud noise. Teacher follows.*)

CURTAIN.

McBRIDE.

THE COMPOSITION

Ellen seated in a chair on stage idly toying with scratch-paper and pencil. Enter *Mary*, also with scratch-book and pencil.

Mary. O Ellen, do pray tell me,—what did Miss Brown say about our writing compositions? You know I was not at school, and Susan White says we are to have them ready by Monday—and I was going to a pic-

nic, too; I think it's real mean. But what subject did she give?

Ellen. Well, for my part, I was in the room when Miss Brown explained the subject, but I guess you know about as much as I do. She said we were to write about "Famous Apples."

Mary. "Famous Apples!" Why, who ever heard of such a thing?

Ellen. Oh, don't you know? First of all, she told us there was the apple Eve ate, and I think that would cover the whole subject, for, heigh! ho! if it had not been for that apple, perhaps there would be no such evil as writing compositions.

Mary (*beginning to scratch with her pencil*). Come on, let's write and get through. Wait a minute. (*Writes rapidly on her scratch-book.*) See how this sounds: (*Reads.*) "Since the morning stars first sang together in their nightly watch over Eden, where our first parents, beguiled by the serpent, ate of that forbidden fruit which brought death and all our woe into the world, apples have ever taken a prominent part in the history, mythology, and literature of the world." Now let me see (*biting her pencil and looking thoughtfully*), what other apples are there?

Ellen. Well, there was the Apple of Discord. Miss Brown said one time a man gave a party and invited everybody but Discord, and this made her very angry, so she threw an apple in the crowd. They all fussed over it ever so long, because Julia and Melvina and—and—what was the other girl's name? I have heard that name before somewhere. Oh, now I have it,—it was Venus. Oh, yes! Charley Fisher said I had a profile like Venus, that's how I came to remember the name. Any way, they all three claimed the apple, till at last they agreed that they would go to France and ask a lady who lived in Paris, and whose name was Ida, to settle the question for them. Ida gave it to Venus, and somehow or other, I don't know how, but it brought on a big war.

Mary (writing). Let me dot down some of these points before I forget. (*Stops writing.*) Did Miss Brown tell you any more—oh, I know! There was the apple William Tell shot from his son's head.

Ellen. Yes, but we must not put that in yet. Miss Brown said we must tell about the apples a girl named Atlanta had. It was a very pretty story, but I began to wonder if the girl was named after Atlanta, and then I saw some June apples in a garden near by, and I wanted some so bad. And then she told us about some apples of Gomorrah—no, that is not right, but it sounded like some name in the Bible. Then there were some sort of golden apples that it was very hard to get, and there was the apple George Washington found in a dumpling.

Mary (rising from her seat, and Ellen rising at the same time, both stand). Well, Ellen, I must thank you for telling me so much. You know if I have a talent for anything, it is for writing compositions; and with the outline you have given, I think I can make a very respectable essay. If you wish any help in arranging yours, it will give me pleasure to assist you. (*Turns as if about to leave.*)

Ellen. O Mary, stop, wait! we must not put in exactly the same things, for then Miss Brown will think we helped each other, and I want that about Discord and William Tell for mine.

Mary (angrily). No, indeed! I thought of William Tell myself, and I mean to put him in my essay, too.

Ellen. Then you are just too mean and sneaking to associate with—after all my trouble in helping you, too. I hope you will never speak to me again!

Mary. Indeed, miss, I am very happy in ending our acquaintance, for I am sure there can be neither pleasure nor profit in it. Wishing you may receive a hundred on your brilliant production, I bid you good-evening. (*Bows very low.*)

Ellen. And the same to you. (*Both continue to bow until they reach the ends of the stage.*)

LULU C. HILLYER.

THE RIVAL SPEAKERS

Enter Thomas, followed by Samuel, a much smaller boy.

Thomas (turning to Samuel). What do you want here?

Samuel. I want to speak my piece, to be sure.

T. Well, you'll be sure to wait; 'tis my turn now.

S. No, it isn't, my learned friend; excuse me, but my turn came before that fellow's who spoke last—him whose voice "was still for open war."

T. It's your own fault if you lost your turn. Go.

S. Well, that's cool—as cool as an iced cucumber. Can't you ask some other favor, Mr. Trotter?

T. Yes. Hold your tongue.

S. Can't do it. Am bound to let off my speech: here goes: "My name is Norval; on the Grampian hills—"

T. (in a louder tone). "Friends, Romans, countrymen!"

S. "Greeks, Regicides, and fellow-sojers!"

T. "Lend me your ears."

S. Don't do it; he has enough of his own.

T. "I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him."

S. (mimics gestures). I come to speak my piece, and I'll do it, Cæsar or no Cæsar. "My name is Norval—"

T. Sam Sly, stop your fooling, or I'll put you off the stage.

S. Don't, Tom; you'll joggle my piece all out of me.

T. Then keep still till I get through.

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears;
I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him."

S. I say, Tommy, whose calf have you been trying to imitate?

T. "The evil that men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Cæsar."

(*Again interrupted by Sam mimicking his gestures.*)
Now, Sam, I tell you to stop your monkey-shines; if you don't, I'll make you.

S. Try it on. Oh, you needn't think you can bully me because you wear higher-heeled shoes than I do.

T. Nothing but your size, sir, saves you from a flogging.

S. Well, that *is* a queer coincidence; for nothing but *your* size saves *you* from the same. (*To the audience.*) What can be done with him? He's too big to be whipped, and he isn't big enough to behave himself. Now all keep still while I try again: "My name is Norval—"

T. "I come to bury Cæsar—"

S. How many more times are you going to do it? A nice man you'd be for an undertaker.

T. Sam, I'm for peace, but if you—

S. You're for peace? I'm for *piece*, too, but for *my* piece, not yours. As I was saying, "My name is—"

T. "Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
(For Brutus is an honorable man—
So are they all, all honorable men),
Come I to speak at Cæsar's funeral."

S. Cæsar is played out, I tell you. "My name is—"

T. "He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honorable man."

S. No such thing! Brutus was a brutal fellow.

T. Come, Sammy, let me finish my piece and then you can have the whole platform to yourself.

S. You're very kind, Mr. Trotter; kind as the Irishman who couldn't live peaceably with his wife, and so they agreed to divide the house between them. "Biddy," said he, "you'll just take the outside of the house, and I'll kape the inside."

T. (*to the audience*). You see it is useless for me to attempt to proceed, so I trust you will excuse me. (*Exit.*)

S. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I hope you'll excuse him. He means well enough, but he's lacking here (*touching head*). He might make a decent crier or auctioneer, but when it comes to oratory—to playing the part of a Marc Antony—well, modesty forbids me to say more, except as the coast is now clear, I will proceed with my part:

“My name is Norval; on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks—a frugal swain—

Whose—whose—whose—” (*aside to a boy near*)—
What is it? “A frugal swain, whose—whose—whose—” There! if I'm not stuck already! So much for that fellow's attempt to bury Cæsar! He buried my memory instead, and your patience too, I fear. “A frugal swain—whose—whose—” I must give it up!
(*Exit with hands over face.*)

THE COMPETING RAILROADS

A Dialogue for Four Boys.

No. 1 meets No. 4, who has a valise, and asks.

Going East, sir?

No. 4. Yes.

No. 1. Well, step right up to the Union Ticket Office. Great through line, sir. Land you in New York sixteen hours in advance of any other route. Finest sleeping and dining cars in the world! Chicken three times a day, and beds free from vermin. Butter on two plates, and molasses all over the table. Come right along, sir.

Here No. 2 appears and hurriedly inquires,

Going East, sir?

No. 4. Yes.

No. 2. Glad to meet you. Step over to the office. Shortest line to New York by twenty-seven miles. Put

you in there nine hours ahead of any other line. Finest eating-houses in the world. Soup three times a day, and fleas bulldozed by machinery. Come with me, sir.

No. 3 comes up from behind and asks,

Going East, sir?

No. 4. Yes.

No. 3. I'm just the man you want to see. Come along with me. Best and shortest route by a long shot to all points. Put you through in a jiffy. Splendid sleeping-cars on all night trains, and codfish-balls for breakfast. Conductors all of pious and respectable parentage, and fires kept up constantly. Come along, sir.

No. 1 takes No. 4 by the left shoulder, No. 2 takes him by the right shoulder, and No. 3 takes him by the coat-tail. In a concert they all pull, and say,

Come with me, sir.

They all ease up, and each says to the others,

Let go of this gentleman.

Then they all ask,

To what point are you going?

No. 4. Going to Maria.

Each one of the agents jerks out a railroad map and studies it intently. After looking on the map several minutes each looks at the others and then at No. 4, and asks,

Where is Maria?

No. 4. Where's Maria? Why, I s'pose she's to hum. Maria is my wife, and lives six miles east of town.

ARRANGED FROM THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.

RUNNING FOR OFFICE

CHARACTERS

MR. JOB JOHNSTON, *A small farmer and a candidate for office.*

MR. HENRY HOBBS, *His friend.*

JACOB ZIMMEL, *Mr. Johnston's man of all work.*

SCENE I.—*A room. Mr. Johnston and Mr. Hobbs discovered seated.*

Mr. Johnston. Yes, I hev thought the matter over fur some time, and I hev concluded to run fur County Commissioner. I hev been workin' in the party and votin' with the party ever since I commenced to vote, and I think I ought to hev an office jist as well as anybody else. I am party well eddicated, and I think I kin hold that office in a right proper manner.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston. Things hev got into sich a way in this county that when a man gets into office he wants to stay there all the time. Now, that's jist the way it is with Tom Raynor, the man who has the office of County Commissioner now. He has had the office fur two tarms, and he wants to git it fur another tarm. I don't believe in doin' business in that way; I go in fur rotatory motion in office.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's what I go in fur.

Mr. Johnston (rising and walking about). I hev been a hard workin' man all my life, and I think I ought to hev a rest now. I think that this thing of holdin' office should go round amongst the people and not stay all the time in one place. That is, I mean that a few men shouldn't git all the offices and the rest of the people git none.

Mr. Hobbs. That's jist what I think about it.

Mr. Johnston. I feel that I hev got enough of an eddication fur to go into the office of County Commissioner. I am purty sure that I kin do the work which has to be done in and about the office. I am a good deal better eddicated that Tom Raynor. Tom Raynor never had much of an eddication.

Mr. Hobbs. No, I s'pose he hadn't.

Mr. Johnston. I hev had a good deal of experience in doin' business. I have been doin' business now fur twenty-five years, and I know all about how business ought to be transacted. There ain't many men that kin git ahead of me in makin' a bargain. I tell you, Henry, we don't git the right kind of men into office somehow. We git sich men as Tom Raynor. Tom Raynor is a man that has never had any experience of any account. He don't know how to drive a bargain; he don't know how to attend to the duties of his office; he don't know nothin'.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston. Now, there ought to be sich a man as me in that office. I tell you if I was there things would be different. There shouldn't be sich high taxes, there shouldn't be any cheatin' and stealin' from the county. I would wake things up and make the rascals flee away.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, you'd jist be the man fur the place.

Mr. Johnston. And I think I'll git the nomination, too. I've been electioneerin' some, and everybody I hev talked to seems to be of the opinion that I am jist the man fur the place. I hev been in the party fur a long time and it would be usin' me purty mean if they didn't give me the nomination.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, it would so!

Mr. Johnston. But I feel purty sure I will git the nomination, and when I git it I will hev no trouble in gittin' elected, fur our party always makes a clean sweep in this county.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston. But I must be movin'. I must up

to Rikerville and come down past Hobblesstown. I hev a great may friends I want to see, and the time fur the nominatin' convention is comin' purty nigh. I must be a movin' fur I don't want to lose the nomination now, after losin' so much of my time.

Mr. Hobbs (rising). Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston. Yes, these are busy times and I must keep movin'. (*Exeunt Mr. Johnston and Mr. Hobbs.*)

Enter Jacob, R.

Jacob. Vell, I tinks dot Mr. Shonston has peen makin' too much fuss apout gittin indo office. Now I wouldn't run afder office so much bad as dot. To dell de truth apout de madder, I wouldn't pe poddered vith an office. Dem fellers dot git indo office dey purty nigh always gits to lyin' und swearin' und stealin' und drinkin', und I tinks dey had petter stay at home und nefer mind de offices. Now, I shoost hope dot Mr. Shonston von't git de office vich he is tryin' so pig hard fur to git. If he vould git it he vould not do any more goot,—he vould shoost not addend to his peesness at all. Vhen I am lifn' here I haf to appear to vant Mr. Shonston to git into office, but I ton't vant him a pit a'ready to git into de office. I spose I vill haf to vote fur him pecause if I didn't und he should find it oud he vould make me leave purty quick a'ready. I ton't vant to leaf here. Dis is von purty doleraple goot place to stay, und I tink I shall haf to vote fur Mr. Shonston und keep on stayin' here.

Enter Mr. Johnston, L.

Mr. Johnston. Well, Jacob, have you heard the news?

Jacob. No, I hafn't heard notings. Vot is de news?

Mr. Johnston. The convention is over and I hev peen defeated—I didn't git the nomination.

Jacob. Tunder! Is dot so? Vell, I tinks dot is putty good.

Mr. Johnston. You don't mean that, do you, Jacob?

Jacob. You can't git indo de office? Is dot vot's de madder?

Mr. Johnston. Yes, they didn't nominate me, they didn't.

Jacob. Vell, vot's to pe done apout it? Vill you kick up a fuss?

Mr. Johnston. Yes, I will. It was downright shabby to use me so. I ought to hev had the office,—fur I've been a great politician and have worked in the party fur twenty-five years.

Jacob. Vot haf you peen vorkin' at?

Mr. Johnston. You don't understand me, Jacob. I have been in the party and hev been workin' fur the party and votin' with it. When a man sticks to a party fur twenty-five years he ought to hev an office. I am not satisfied at all—I won't endure it.

Jacob. But vot are you goin' to do? How are you goin' to git at fur to kick up a fuss?

Mr. Johnston. Well, I'll tell you. I am goin' to run as an independent candidate.

Jacob. Vere are you goin' to run to?

Mr. Johnston. O, Jacob, you don't understand English. I am goin' to be a candidate, anyhow, and I feel sure I will be elected, fur the people see I hev been shamefully treated. Each party will nominate a man and then I will be a candidate too. That's runnin' as an independent candidate.

Jacob. Und vot will you do if de beople von't elect you?

Mr. Johnston. Oh, I'll be elected,—you needn't git scared about that. The people see that I have been shamefully treated, and they will rise up in their indignation and carry me triumphantly in office.

Jacob. Is dot de vay dey do in dis gountry?

Mr. Johnston. Yes, this is a glorious country, and when the people see that there is wrong-doin' goin' on they rise up in their might and put the man in office who is entitled to it.

Jacob. Und I s'pose dot you is de man dot is entitled to dis office?

Mr. Johnston. Yes, I am the man and I must be elected. I am edicated and I hev been in business fur twenty-five years.

Jacob. Den you is shoost de man.

Mr. Johnston. I feel sure that the people will stand by me; they will see that I hev not had fair play and they will rise up and with a great shout they will rush to the polls and elect me to the office which I ought to hev.

Jacob. Vell, I'd petter go oud und git to diggin' dem botaters. (*Exit Jacob L.*)

ACT II.

SCENE II.—*Same as first act.—Mr. Johnston, Mr. Hobbs and Jacob seated.*

Mr. Johnston. Well, the election is over and I am defeated. And what an awful defeat it is, too! I only got ten votes. (*Rising and walking about.*) I declare this is too bad. I didn't know I was livin' in sich a place and among sich ungrateful people. Why shouldn't I hev had the office? Why didn't the people vote fur me when they said jist to my face that I was jist the man fur the office? It is an outrage to be treated in this way.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Jacob. Vell, Mr. Shonston, I vould nefer touch a bolitic again. Und if de boliticians vould come aroundt you again I shoost vould knock dem all ofer.

Mr. Johnston. I am an eddicated man, and I am well qualified fur the position and the people of the county all know this, yet when I run fur the office the people turn around and vote fur Tom Raynor and the other man. Some of them have had the impudence to tell me that I should not hev run as an independent candidate.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's what some of them said to me about it.

Mr. Johnston. That's a nice way fur men to talk, now isn't it? Jist as if I didn't know my own business. I believe that when a man gits treated the way I was he ought to rise up and run as an independent candidate. And the people ought all to rush up and elect that man. But in this county the people are all blockheads.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston. When the people don't git the right man nominated they ought to turn and vote fur the man who ought to hev got the nomination. But the people here don't know anything. They jist vote fur whoever gits the nomination. They think it would be a dreadful thing to leave the party.

Jacob. Vell, I tinks dot dis bolitics is a purty droublesome peesness.

Mr. Johnston. Yes, it is.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so.

Mr. Johnston. I am goin' to stop now. I won't hev nothin' more to do with politics. I won't even go to the polls and vote fur anybody else. I've been shamefully treated—I've been abused.

Jacob (aside). Vell, if he quits de bolitics I s'pose der botaters vill pe petter addended to.

Mr. Johnston. I'm done with politics and politicians; yes, I'm done with them forever. I've been shamefully abused.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Jacob. Vell, Mr. Shonston, I tinks dat is shoost righd; I wouldn't touch dem nohow. Shoost look at me—I ton't bodder vith bolitics, and I always feels purty good. I am shoost von Sharman vot addends to my own peesness, and I feel a good deal petterish as anypody vot boddors himself apout bolitics. This pig fool elec-is ofer und now I tinks ve can go oudt und git dem botaters raised up a'ready.

Mr. Johnston. Yes, but before we go I want to say a word to the audience.

Mr. Hobbs. That's so! We ought to say a word to the audience.

Jacob. Vell, I ton't know vot you haf got to say to de audience. I s'pose dey don't care nothin' apout der botaters.

Mr. Johnston (to audience). I will never more dabble in politics.

Jacob (to audience). He's shoost righd, but he's goin' to dapple a good deal more in de botater peesness.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so!

Mr. Johnston. When a plain fellow, such as I am, gets an idea that he ought to hold some office, my experience shows me that the best office for him, and the one for which he is most fitted, is his own office, his own business; and as to running as an independent candidate, he is only offering one more example of falling to the ground between two stools.

Mr. Hobbs. Yes, that's so.

Mr. Johnston. Oh! you old magpie! Come, Jake—
(*Exeunt Mr. Johnston and Jacob, R.*)

Mr. Hobbs. That's not so! (*Exit L.*)

CURTAIN.

H. E. McBRIDE.

KATIE MALONEY'S PHILOSOPHY

CHARACTERS

ALICE, *A young mistress.*

KATIE MALONEY, *Her servant.*

SCENE.—*A neat kitchen, Katie scrubbing the floor and singing. Enter Alice.*

Alice. What are you singing for?

Katie. Oh, I don't know, ma'am, without it's because my heart feels happy.

Alice. Happy, are you, Katie Maloney? Let me see: you don't own a foot of land in the world?

Katie. Foot of land, is it? (*With a hearty Irish laugh.*) Oh, what a hand ye be after joking; why, I haven't a penny, let alone the land.

Alice. Your mother is dead?

Katie. God rest her soul, yes. (*With a touch of genuine pathos.*) May the angels make her bed in Heaven.

Alice. Your brother is still a hard case, I suppose?

Katie. Ah, you may well say that. It's nothing but drink, drink, drink, and beating his poor wife.

Alice. You have to pay your little sister's board?

Katie. Sure, the bit creature; and she's a good little girl, is Hinny, willing to do whatever I axes her. I don't grudge the money what goes for that.

Alice. You haven't many fashionable dresses either, Katie Maloney?

Katie. Fashionable, is it? Oh, yes, I put a piece of whalebone in my skirt, and me calico gown looks as big as the great ladies'. But then ye says true, I hasn't but two gowns to me back, two shoes to me feet, and one bonnet to me head, barring the old hood ye gave me.

Alice. You haven't any lover, Katie Maloney?

Katie. Oh, be off wid ye—ketch Katie Maloney getting a lover these days, when the hard times is come. No, no, thank Heaven I haven't got that to trouble me yet, nor I don't want it.

Alice. What on earth, then, have you got to make you happy? A drunken brother, a poor helpless sister, no mother, no father, no lover; why, where do you get all your happiness from?

Katie. The Lord be praised, miss, it growed up in me. Give me a bit of sunshine, a clean flure, plenty of work, and a sup at the right time, and I'm made. That makes me laugh and sing; and then, if deep trouble comes, why God helpin' me, I'll try to keep my heart up. Sure, it would be a sad thing if Patrick McGrue should take it into his head to come an' axe me, but, the Lord willin', I'd try to bear up under it.

WRITING A LETTER

CHARACTERS

MARY.

SUSIE.

*Mary sewing. Susie at a table writing.**Susie.* Oh, dear!*Mary.* Why, Susie, what is the matter? Oh what a dolorous face!*Susie.* Yours would be dolorous too, over such awful work.*Mary.* Why, what are you doing?*Susie.* Writing a letter to brother James. Mother said he wished me to write to him, and so I am trying, but I never can do it, I know. Never!*Mary.* But why not? I do not see anything so very terrible in writing to a brother whom you love dearly.*Susie.* But I don't know what to say.*Mary.* Then if he were here, you would not speak to him?*Susie.* Oh, Mary!*Mary.* What would you say?*Susie.* Why, a thousand things. I should ask him to tell me all about his journey, and how he found grandma, and whether my little chickens are all great hens, since last summer, and I should tell him all about our visit to the circus, and the ride we took yesterday, and all about the new cage John is making for the hawk, and what a chase Rover gave us last week, and— Why, Mary, I could talk straight ahead for a week, and not tell him half the things he would like to hear.*Mary.* Then your letter should be easy enough. Write him all these things.*Susie.* But mother said I was to write him a *letter*.*Mary.* Well?*Susie.* But such everyday talk as that is not a letter.

Mary. Pray what is your idea of a letter?

Susie. Why, a letter is about something particular. I am sure papa talks about *business* letters, and *friendly* letters, and *dunning* letters, and *money* letters; and mother says she must write letters of condolence, and letters of congratulation, and (*laughing,*) I know somebody who writes *love* letters.

Mary. But your letter to James is a sisterly letter. Have you commenced it?

Susie. Yes. (*Reads.*) "Dear James: I take my pen in hand to inform you—"

Mary. Well?

Susie. That's all.

Mary. Then write—"to inform you that I was such a little simpleton, that I thought I must write a formal, stiff letter, about something particular, to my dear brother, but sister Mary having told me you would like me to write just as I would talk if you were here, I am going to tell you about my visit to the circus." There, Susie, will that do for a start?

Susie. But will he really like such a letter as that?

Mary. I am quite sure he will.

Susie. Then it will be no trouble at all to write to him.

Mary. In writing a letter, Susie, you may safely conclude that the same subjects that would interest your correspondent if you were chatting with him, will also interest him when written.

Susie. Then a letter is just written conversation?

Mary. A friendly or family letter. Letters upon certain subjects, or between strangers, must be more formal.

Susie. Then I may just write to brother James as if he was here, and I was talking to him?

Mary. Exactly.

Susie. Thank you, sister! My letter will be easily written now.

CURTAIN.

S. A. FROST.

THE WONDERFUL SCHOLAR

CHARACTERS

MR. MARTIN. MRS. SMITH. ELLEN.

Mr. Martin, entering, finds Mrs. Smith sewing, Ellen reading.

Mr. Martin. Good morning, Mrs. Smith.

Mrs. Smith. Good morning, neighbor. I'm wonderful glad to see you!

Mr. Martin. How are you, Ellen? Home for good?

Mrs. Smith. Dear me, neighbor; I hope she ain't home for bad.

Mr. Martin. Is she going to stay?

Mrs. Smith. I 'spect she will, if she don't go away again.

Mr. Martin. Finished schooling?

Mrs. Smith. Yes, neighbor, she's eddicated way up!

Mr. Martin. Come here, Ellen. (*Ellen comes to him.*) Now let's see what you know?

Mrs. Smith. Know! ther ain't nothing she don't know.

Mr. Martin. Did you study grammar, Nell?

Ellen. I didn't study nothing else.

Mr. Martin. Parse me that book. (*Ellen hands him the book.*)

Mr. Martin. What gender is book, Nell?

Ellen. Nominative gender, speculative cases, and agrees with them as understands it.

Mr. Martin. Wonderful! Did you learn history?

Ellen. You'd better believe I did.

Mr. Martin. Who was Napoleon Bonaparte?

Ellen. He was a man, a good man, and he died one day.

Mr. Martin. Who won the battle of Waterloo?

Ellen. The side that whipped the other side.

Mr. Martin. Who was elected President of the United States after Washington?

Ellen. The man who succeeded him.

Mr. Martin. You have improved your opportunities in a most remarkable manner. Did you learn arithmetic?

Ellen. I guess I did.

Mr. Martin. If it takes five men six days to dig a well, how long will it take one man?

Ellen. That's fractions. One-fifth of the time.

Mr. Martin. You don't say so! I'll go home and discharge four of the fellows at work on mine to-night.

Mrs. Smith. There, Ellen! That's making eddication of practical use, ain't it, neighbor?

Mr. Martin. What else did you study, Nell? Geography?

Ellen. Yes, indeed.

Mr. Martin. Where are the straits of Gibraltar?

Ellen. In the same place they've been in all along.

Mr. Martin. What bounds the United States?

Ellen. Matrimony.

Mr. Martin. What is a cape?

Ellen. A garment ladies wear on their shoulders.

Mr. Martin. What is the highest mountain in the world?

Ellen. The one whose top is nearest the sky.

Mr. Martin. Did you learn to spell?

Ellen. Of course I did.

Mr. Martin. Spell cataract.

Ellen. K—at—cat—a—cata—rac—k rack.

Mr. Martin. Now spell ice cream.

Ellen. I—s—k—r—e—m—e.

Mr. Martin. Amazing! Did you learn mythology?

Mrs. Smith. Indeed she did, neighbor. You can't puzzle her in the ologies and isms, can he, Nell?

Ellen. No, indeed, mother.

Mr. Martin. Who was Mercury?

Ellen. Mercury—Mercury—oh, a New York Sunday newspaper. I saw it once. I knew I knowed that name somehow.

Mr. Martin. Can you tell me anything about Jupiter?

Ellen. Jew Peter. Never heard tell on him.

Mr. Martin. What do you know about Natural Philosophy?

Ellen. Know all about it, of course.

Mr. Martin. When a circular object revolves on a horizontal plane, in what direction does the center of gravity move?

Ellen. Hey?

Mrs. Smith. Land, neighbor, don't puzzle her that ar way. Ax her questions in English.

Mr. Martin. Well, then, tell me, Ellen, when does a retreating object become invisible to the eye?

Ellen. When it goes out of sight.

Mrs. Smith. There, I knowed she could answer if you axed her right. She's larned a heap, ain't she, neighbor?

Mr. Martin. It is perfectly marvelous. I never saw anything like it.

Ellen. I was crack scholar of that school. Head of the class when there wasn't nobody above me.

Mr. Martin. When was that?

Ellen. Mostly rainy days, when the other girls was not here.

Mr. Martin. Well, be careful you don't overtax your brain, for it won't bear much more pressure.

Mrs. Smith. Lor, neighbor! Is there any danger of her brains gitting weak?

Mr. Martin. No, I don't think they will *get* weak.

Mrs. Smith. That's a comfort. Some folks have awful rushes of brains to the head.

Mr. Martin. She will never be troubled that way. But she had better be very careful of what brains she's got, or they may evaporate entirely.

Mrs. Smith. I'll be very careful. Put away your

books, Ellen, and go feed the chickens. (*Ellen goes out.*) Nobody but a mother knows the trial of bringing up a wonderful scholar!

S. A. FROST.

THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD

CHARACTERS

JOHN.

HENRY.

THOMAS.

LOUIS.

ARTHUR.

PETER.

JOE.

The boys all seated at their desks. A number of other boys at desks. John in the teacher's seat.

John (striking desk with ruler). Silence! (In a loud voice.)

Thomas. Nobody is making a noise but you.

John. Silence, I tell you! (In a louder voice.)

Henry. Set an example, if you want silence.

John. Silence! (As loud as he can speak.)

Louis. Silence!

All the Boys. Silence!

John. Having produced silence from the whole of you, we will now proceed to the day's studies. First class in history! (All jump up.) Keep your seats, but answer the questions. (All sit down.) Who discovered America?

Henry. Peter the Hermit!

Thomas. Queen Victoria!

Louis. Louis Napoleon!

Peter. Martin Van Buren!

Joe. Hail Columbia!

John. Was there ever such a set of blockheads?

Christopher Columbus discovered America—in—in—well, some time ago!

Henry. Bully for him!

Thomas. Three cheers for Chris! (*All cheer three times.*)

John. Silence! What do you mean by all this racket?

Louis. Give it up!

John. Louis, you are so smart! Who beheaded Cromwell?

Louis. Oh! oh! oh! (*All the boys echo, oh! oh! oh!*)

John. Stop that noise! Louis, answer the question.

Louis. I can't.

John. Henry, you answer it!

Henry. Never knew before he was beheaded!

John. I never heard of such gross ignorance! Never knew Charles the First was beheaded?

Louis. You said Cromwell!

John. It's all the same thing.

Henry. I bet Charles didn't think so!

John. Thomas, who beheaded Charles the First?

Thomas. The executioner.

John. Louis, what are you giggling about?

Louis. I, sir? I was only smiling serenely.

John. Go to the dunce stool.

Louis. Certainly, sir. (*Goes and sits on dunce stool.*)

John. Henry!

Henry. Here, sir.

John. Hold your tongue, and tell me who was the first President of the United States?

Henry. How can I tell you, if I hold my tongue?

John. Hold your tongue, sir, and answer me!

Henry (*holding his tongue with his fingers*). John Jacob Astor.

John. Who? Speak distinctly.

Henry (*letting his tongue go*). Louis the Fourteenth!

John. I am ashamed of you. Who was the father of his country?

Henry. The son of its grandfather, sir.

John. No levity, sir!

Henry. The husband of its mother, then.

John. Go sit on the dunce stool, you blockhead!
(*Henry sits in Louis's lap.*)

John. Thomas, do you know your geography lesson?

Thomas. You'll find out, when you hear it.

John. Bound Maine.

Thomas. Can't do it, sir. The boundless main is proverbial.

John. Where are the Andes?

Thomas. All my aunties are at home, thank you, sir.

John. How long is the Amazon River?

Thomas. Just three inches, sir, on my map. It is rather longer on the map against the wall.

John (sternly). I'll have no more nonsense! Where is Georgia?

Thomas. Down South, and no nonsense about it!

John. Go to the dunce stool, sir.

(*Thomas goes and sits on Henry's lap.*)

John. Arthur, what is a conic section?

Arthur. The most comic section I ever saw, sir, was in the Sunday papers, sir.

John. Conic, Arthur!

Arthur. Yes, sir: comic Arthur, if you will!

John. Arthur, if ten tons of grain cost one hundred dollars, how many cattle will it feed?

Arthur. I don't believe the cat'll eat ten tons, sir. Our cat won't, anyhow.

John. Arthur, you are too smart for this school. I shall be obliged to dismiss you.

Arthur. Thank you! (*Jumps up.*)

John. But first, you may sit an hour on the dunce stool. (*Arthur sits on Thomas's lap.*)

John. Peter, do you know your definitions?

Peter. I don't know, sir.

John. Don't know what, your definitions?

Peter. I don't know if I know my definitions or no.

John. Define Cosmopolitan.

Peter. Cricky!

John. Not the proper definition. Go to the dunce stool. (*Peter sits in Arthur's lap.*)

Louis. I say, John, it's getting rather heavy here. Some of you fellows come underneath. (*Slips out, and they all fall down.*)

John. Order there!

Henry. You undertook to order for all of us.

John. Sit down, all of you!

(*All try for the stool, finally sit as before, Louis on Peter's lap, Henry on the stool.*)

John. Joseph!

Joe (*in a squeaking voice*). That's me! Short for Joe!

John. Joseph, what is a verb?

Joe. Part of speech, sir.

John. Very good! What part?

Joe. The—the—verbal part!

John. Oh, Joe! Joe! What a dunce you are!

Henry. Oh, John! John! here comes the teacher!

(*All hurry to their seats, and begin to study out loud.*)

CURTAIN.

S. A. FROST.

FOR THE TEMPERANCE CAUSE

CHARACTERS

FRANK DICKSON.

HARRY BELL.

WILLIE BURNS.

SCENE.—*A room. Table C. Three chairs about it.**Frank, Harry and Willie discovered seated.*

Frank. We are only little boys, but couldn't we do something in the temperance cause?

Harry. I don't know what we could do.

Willie. I know. We could learn temperance speeches and speak them, and maybe that would do some good.

Frank. And we could sing temperance songs.

Harry. But if we should learn temperance speeches and speak them, who would listen to us?

Willie. Oh, we would have plenty of hearers. You know it would be a novelty to hear a boy speak in the temperance cause.

Harry. And would you just have one speech?

Willie. No, I'd have half a dozen, and I would try to speak them in such a way that everybody would listen.

Frank. Couldn't we organize a little temperance society, and have speeches and songs and dialogues?

Willie. Yes, we can do that, too, but I want to learn a few speeches and go out and speak them to big people. I think they will listen to me because I am a boy, and maybe some drunkard will hear me and stop drinking. Oh! I would like to do something in the temperance cause. I think it is awful for men to get drunk and come home and beat their wives and children, and if I can do anything to stop it I'm sure I am willing to commence and to try. I will speak a few lines to you now. When I commit a speech I will put them in so as to make my speech longer. (*Speaks.*)

"Grief banished by wine will come again,
And come with a deeper shade,
Leaving, perchance, on the soul a stain
Which sorrow hath never made.
Then fill not the tempting glass for me,
If mournful, I will not be mad;
Better sad, because we are sinful,
Than sinful because we are sad."

Harry. That's a very nice speech. Now I will speak one I learned some time ago. The name of my speech is "The Victim."

"A poor old man with haggard face
And hair as white as snow,
Lay on a heap of dirty straw,
His life pulse beating slow.
Sometimes he sighed, 'I want to rest!
There's no one cares for me—
I dreamed of dear old friends—I woke
To friendless misery!"

There comes a change—the pallid face
Is flushed with purple now,
His wild eyes stare, and hard, deep lines
Are marked across his brow.
'They come!' he cries—'they come again!
Oh, take them out of sight!
Must these things watch all day? I thought
They only came by night!"

'The loathsome serpents winding crawl,
All slimy o'er the floor—
The death's head, with its sockets dry,
Stares in at yonder door!
'At last, with adder's tongue of fire,
It stings,' the wise man said—
'And biteth with its *serpent tooth!*'—
There lies its victim—DEAD!"

Willie. That's a very good speech, and you speak it well. When we get our Temperance society organized you can give us a speech every night. Frank, can you recite a temperance poem?

Frank. No, I have never learned any temperance poems, but I can repeat part of a temperance lecture which was delivered by the celebrated poetess and eloquent speaker, Miss Julia Crouch. Here it is:—
(*Speaks.*)

"There are many who object to women's raising their voices against or in favor of anything which concerns the masses. They believe that they must not be heard outside of their own and their neighbors' houses, except when they *oblige* them to appear in court and in the presence of perhaps a thousand people, tell their story and be questioned by the lawyers as they see fit. But when a woman stands up voluntarily and tries to persuade people to be true and noble; when her heart prompts her to speak the truth that it may be more universal, then you will hear men talking about *woman's sphere* and questioning her ability. What can a woman do more noble, more elevating, more praiseworthy, more heroic, more needful, more *womanly*, than to use her voice and her powers in speaking against intemperance?

"Whom does it concern if not her? If men will cease to drink; if they will rouse themselves to vigorous action and sweep away intemperance, women will not spend their time nor their talents in speaking against it. But so long as saloon keepers deal out the deadly beverage which makes men beastly instead of manly; so long as men beat their wives and starve their children, so long as women are obliged to work to support themselves and their drunken husbands; so long as intemperate sons cause their mothers to go down in sorrow to their graves; so long as women have women's hearts and intemperance is aiming such a deadly blow to destroy their loved ones and their country, *just so long* will they implore and beseech men to be temperate."

Harry. That is a very eloquent speech. Who did you say was the author of it?

Frank. Miss Julia Crouch, the celebrated temperance lecturer.

Harry. Does she lecture now?

Frank. No, I believe not.

Harry. I am sorry she has stopped lecturing. A lady who can write such a speech or lecture as that can certainly do a great deal of good.

Willie. I mean to be a great temperance lecturer when I get to be a man, but I am going to learn to speak temperance speeches now. I think I can do some good in that way.

Frank. Yes, we can all do something. Of course boys can't do as much as men and great temperance lecturers, but they can have meetings and they can speak temperance speeches and sing temperance songs and they can do something for the cause. I have been reading some awful things about drunken men starving and whipping their wives and children, and I think everybody ought to try to do something to put a stop to drunkenness and crime.

Harry. I'll tell you what I mean to do. You know Mr. Jones?

Frank and Willie. Yes.

Harry. Well, I intend to go to him and ask him to stop drinking. He is always very kind and very pleasant when he is sober, but when he drinks whisky he is very foolish. I am going to ask him to stop drinking and maybe I'll speak a speech to him.

Frank. Who shall we ask to join our society?

Willie. Let us have Johnny Dean and Fred Grayson and Charley Wilson and Willie Ray and—oh, we might have all the boys.

Frank. I'll go and tell Johnny Dean about it now.

Harry. And I'll go and tell Fred Grayson and Charley Wilson.

Frank (commences to sing and is joined by the others).

“Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah,
Hurrah, for the temperance cause.”

(They all go out while singing.)

CURTAIN.

McBRIDE.

AN EDITOR'S TRIALS

A Comic Dialogue

CHARACTERS

MR. COLLINGTON CLIPPER, *Editor of the Daily Distorter.*

LEONIDAS LEADWELL, *His Foreman.*

HON. HORATIO TESTY, *A distinguished Citizen.*

BEVERLY SPONGER, *An impecunious Penny-a-liner.*

BOY, *Printer's Devil.*

SCENE.—*The Editor's room. Mr. Clipper discovered at a table, on which sundry papers are scattered about, leaning back in his chair abstractedly. He looks at his watch.*

Clip. Hum—Nine o'clock—(*rings a small handbell. Enter Boy*). Take this copy to Mr. Leadwell, and say that I wish to see him if he can step down. (*Exit Boy*.) This will not do, no copy yet from Doleful, and not an item from Makeup!—It is of no use hesitating. I *must* write something, but what that something is to be about I have no more idea than that boy.

Reënter Boy.

Boy. Mr. Leadwell says he has given out all his copy, sir, and he is coming down hisself for more, sir.

Clip. Hisself! *Himself*, you ungrammatical young scoundrel; is it not enough to be troubled both in body and mind, without the additional torture of your vagaries? Vanish, you imp of darkness! (*Exit Boy*.)

No news—nothing to make a single *par.* of. (*Looks over papers hurriedly.*)

Enter Mr. Leadwell.

Lead. Anything more ready, Mr. Clipper?

Clip. What do you want yet to complete, Leadwell?

Lead. Three columns and a half, sir.

Clip. The deuce! No fresh *ads.*?

Lead. No, all in, sir, *dummies* and all.

Clip. What standing matter have you?

Lead. Not a line, sir, all used up.

Clip. Is "Slaves of the Oar" still on the *galley*?

Lead. No, distributed last week.

Clip. Then you have really nothing at all?

Lead. Nothing, and the men standing.

Clip. Here then, take this "Romantic Suicide," and this "Singular Dream" to go on with. I will ring when I have more. (*Exit Leadwell.*) I really *must* do something. (*Writes.*) "A distinguished Senator, whose name we are not at present at liberty to divulge, has had a prolonged interview with the President, and it is confidently whispered in certain circles that great and important changes will be eventually made somewhere, which changes may be expected to take place at any time. We shall, however, take care to be on the *qui vive* for further information, which we shall be happy to lay before our readers."

Enter Leadwell.

Lead. There is a long police report just come in about a charge of kleptomania against a well known citizen's daughter—shall I use it at length?

Clip. Yes, certainly, and head it "Singular and Mysterious Charge of Theft—a Distinguished Citizen's Daughter in Trouble!" And, by-the-bye, Leadwell, you may as well *double-lead* the leaders.

Lead. There is also an explosion from Doleful, with fifteen lives lost.

Clip. You may head that—"Terrific Explosion!"

Upwards of Twenty Lives Lost!" and we must put in a contradictory *par.* with further particulars—stay, this will do. (*Writes.*) "We are happy to inform our readers that the first received account of this disaster, which has desolated so many homes, was much exaggerated; we have much pleasure in being now in a position to state confidently that the number of unfortunate people who have lost their lives will not exceed fifteen." Here, take it with you. (*Exit Leadwell.*)

I never knew such an absolute dearth of news in the whole course of my lengthy experience. There is nothing new. By-the-bye, it will read like a piece of news to announce that there is nothing to tell. (*Writes.*) "We have never, in the whole course of our long experience, known so barren a time as the present. There is not a single item of foreign news of importance, and the old standing items have been so garbled and twisted about in every form and variety of sentence to make them still readable, that it is impossible to put another new face on them. Whether this profound calm may be only the harbinger of a coming storm, or not, we do not know. The attitude of Russia is the same, there is no change in the political situation in Great Britain, Germany is still in her old position, Austria is unchanged, France is unaltered, Italy stands as she did, and the rest of Europe has not moved. If we turn our eyes to the republics of South America, we find the same unaltered appearance; we will pursue this painful theme no longer, but merely remark, in conclusion, that a few days or even hours may justify our most anxious apprehensions." (*Knock at the door.*) Come in.

Enter Beverly Sponger.

Ah, Sponger, how are you? Anything new?

Sponger. Yes. I think I can let you have an item or two. I see you made use of the information I gave you of the death of the Hon. Horatio Testy yesterday.

Have you heard of the most singular manner in which he has bequeathed his wealth?

Clip. No.

Sponger. Oh, by the way, I promised to escort a party to the opera to-morrow evening, perhaps you will oblige me with your pass for the occasion.

Clip. With pleasure. (*Gives it.*) But this bequest, Sponger?

Sponger. Oh, the old fool has cut his only son off with a small annuity, and left his enormous estate, with all the personals, to— But you could never guess, it is perfectly startling.

Clip. Is it such a surprise—to whom?

Sponger. To build a temple to Buddha in Boston.

Clip. Great Heavens! (*Makes a hurried memorandum.*)

Sponger. I can give you another item. I have just heard that four brothers are to marry four sisters, in this city, next May. They are members of the first families. This item is only known to myself and a few other privileged persons—so mum is the word—you know. Dear me, I had almost forgotten—can you spare me your ticket for Wallack's to-morrow, and I intend visiting the Encore Music Hall on Friday, so you may as well let me have that also. Of course, I need not tell you to keep dark about the small items of private information I have given you, as a friend; oh, those are the tickets, thanks, good-evening. (*Exit Sponger.*)

Clip. It takes me all my time to look after those eternal press tickets; I forget who has them, I must make a *mem.* of it. (*Writes in a pocket-book.*) Hallo—back again!

Reënter Sponger.

Sponger. I had almost forgotten to mention the business I came specially about. I am very fond of fried oysters, and Mr. Samuel Dolton has opened a restaurant, 220 Broadway, where he retails those charming

edibles at thirty cents a dozen, and I promised to procure him a small paragraph in your paper, here it is—(*gives paper*)—just give it as prominent a position as you can. (*Exit Sponger.*)

Clip. There is something very mysterious about Sponger, he knows everything and everybody, and yet all he tells you he wishes you to keep secret, and goes about telling the same secret to everyone else, until you hear it again as a secret from some outsider, who absolutely expects a consideration for privately communicating a piece of news that you have been in possession of for a month. What is this *par.* he wishes to have inserted? (*Reads.*) “The public will be extremely rejoiced when they have realized the fact that Mr. Dolton, who is a most indefatigable philanthropist, has opened a restaurant in the popular thoroughfare of Broadway, where they may at any time luxuriate in the fried bivalves, for the *minimum* charge of thirty cents a dozen. We consider this to be a real boon to our citizens, and thank Mr. Dolton for having made at least *one* step in the right direction.” Hum—this ought to be paid for as an *ad.*, but I suppose I shall have to use it as a fill-up to oblige Sponger. So be it.—Now for his other item of information. (*Writes.*) “A rumor has just reached us, from a most reliable source, to the effect that a most extraordinary event is shortly to occur in the fashionable circles of this city. Four of our prominent society men—brothers—are to lead to the altar four charming sisters in the merry month of May. It is said there is considerable romance connected with the affair, and when the particulars are known, the quartette wedding will be more than a nine days’ wonder. The statement that a clergyman has been hired to do the “job” for a lump sum has no foundation in fact. We do not wish to boast of our means of information on this subject, but our readers may rely upon this being undoubtedly correct, although in its detail, strictly a secret at present. Sufficient has been said to put our readers on the *qui vive*,

and we shall take care, in their interests, to give the matter all the publicity it deserves when time shall serve."

Enter Boy.

Boy. Copy, sir!

Clip. Yes, thou moving terror, take these two papers. (*Exit Boy.*) (*Writes again.*) "We understand, from the best authority, that the late eccentric Horatio Testy, whose lamentable decease we so *regretfully* announced in our yesterday's issue, has bequeathed his large property in a most singular, not to say reprehensible manner, having entirely disinherited his only son (whom we believe to be a most exemplary young gentleman), and left, in trust, that vast wealth which was due to his son in all righteousness and equity, to build a magnificent Temple to Buddha, in the city of Boston. We shall speak more fully of this matter on a future occasion, meanwhile we advise the worthy son of a most eccentric father to contest the validity of the will, as any court would doubtless set aside a bequest at once so unreasonable and so wickedly insane."

Enter Boy.

Boy. Copy, sir—Mr. Leadwell says—

Clip. Ha, thou incubus! here, take this—vanish. Stay, what hadst thou for dinner to-day?

Boy. Mackerel, sir.

Clip. Here then. (*Writes.*) "Mackerel are just now in season, and are cheap and plentiful. We are glad to announce the fact, as they furnish, with the help of a few potatoes, a very wholesome and economical dinner for the poorer classes." Take this also and begone. (*Exit Boy.*)

Enter Hon. Horatio Testy.

Testy. Are you the editor of this scandalous publication I hold in my hand, sir?

Clip. I am the editor of the *Daily Distorter*, sir, I believe.

Test. Then I come to demand an apology from you for one of the grossest falsehoods ever issued from the public press.

Clip. You must be most signally mistaken, sir; there is not an item of news or general information inserted in the *Daily Distorter* which is not founded upon the most undisputed authority.

Test. Then you would have me believe that the undisputed authority of your paltry publication knows more of a man's affairs than he does himself, sir; is that it?

Clip. By no means, sir. I only wish to impress upon you the fact that all our information is derived from the parties most interested therein, which source cannot be well doubted.

Test. I should like to know from what source this paragraph was derived. Read that, sir. (*Points out a paragraph.*)

Clip. (*reads*). "Death of Horatio Testy. We regret to announce the sudden death of our esteemed townsman, Horatio Testy, who expired after dinner yesterday in a sudden fit of apoplexy. The deceased gentleman, who has filled numerous offices of trust in this city, was universally known and highly respected, and his death will leave a hiatus which it will take many years to fill." Well, sir?

Test. Well, sir! Whose authority had you for this paragraph?

Clip. The best authority, sir; it came from an intimate friend of Mr. Testy's family—what is more, sir, you will not only find a confirmation of the sad event in to-morrow's issue, but also a statement of the manner in which he has bequeathed his vast wealth, which will surprise you.

Test. It will, indeed. Am I asking too much in requesting to be prematurely enlightened upon that subject?

Clip. Not at all, sir, it will be before the public to-morrow.

Test. Then perhaps you will kindly give me the information?

Clip. With pleasure. In the first place he has entirely disinherited his only son, who is one of the most promising young men in the city.

Test. Indeed!

Clip. I assure you, sir, the fact is past doubt. He has left all his estates to erect a magnificent Temple to Buddha, in the city of Boston.

Test. What, at Boston?

Clip. At Boston. What is your opinion of the sanity of a man who makes such a foolish bequest?

Test. What is your opinion of the sanity of a man who tells such an improbable story, or the sanity of an editor who gives such a tirade of falsehood publicity?

Clip. Sir, I do not sit here to be insulted with impunity.

Test. Nor do I stand here to listen to such twaddle; am I to understand that the Buddha story will appear in the *Daily Distorter*?

Clip. Most certainly; the information we have received is from a privileged friend of the late Mr. Testy.

Test. I'll be hanged, sir, if your friend is more privileged than I am.

Clip. Permit me to doubt the fact, sir.

Test. Doubt the fact! Why, you're all a doubt, your whole publication is a doubt; do you think I do not know whether I am alive or dead?

Clip. What do you mean, sir?

Test. I mean that I am Horatio Testy. (*Clipper starts up.*) Do I look like a dead man?

Clip. You—you—you are Hon. Horatio Testy?

Test. Undoubtedly, sir.

Clip. And are you sure you are not dead?

Test. Dead! I'm not only *alive*, but I shall be *kick-ing* if I can only find out the author of the scandalous statement. My wife has been so pestered with under-

takers' cards, and applications from mourning establishments, that I conscientiously wish that all such people were bequeathed, instead of my money, to the Temple of Buddha.

Clip. I can only express my sincere regret, Mr. Testy, that the announcement, which I now see to be entirely without foundation, should have appeared in our paper, but I cannot consistently divulge the name of my informant, who may have been as much mistaken as myself. It is not the custom of newspapers to make public any private source of information, and as the offensive paragraph will be at once withdrawn, and the former announcement contradicted to-morrow, I presume that it will be quite sufficient to meet your wishes.

Test. Let me advise you in future to be more careful in accepting such gratuitous information. Good-morning, sir. (*Exit Hon. Horatio Testy.*)

Clipper rings bell. Enter Boy.

Clip. Inform Mr. Leadwell that I wish to see him as soon as possible. (*Exit Boy.*) This is a misfortune! I wish he had not come until to-morrow; the announcement concerning the eccentric will, and its contradiction afterwards, would have sold a few thousands extra. Well! we must make the best of it. (*Writes.*) "We cannot sufficiently regret having given publicity to an unfounded rumor of the death of the Hon. Horatio Testy, yesterday. Contrary to our usual system we gave immediate insertion to the report of an event which, had it been truth, would, we are aware, have been deeply deplored by the general public. We usually wait for a confirmation of such tidings, but the supposed event was so appalling, and so important to all our readers, that we, for once, departed from our usual course, against our better judgment. We are, however, happy to say that the gentleman in question is not only living, but in the enjoyment of the most perfect health, as we can per-

sonally testify, having been honored by a friendly call from him this day. We are only too happy in the knowledge of being able to depend upon his known talents, public integrity, and private virtues, for some time longer. *Verbum sap.*"

Enter Leadwell.

Clip. Ha, Leadwell, have you set the *par.* about the Hon. Horatio Testy?

Lead. Yes, sir.

Clip. Then *dis* it again. He is not dead at all. I wonder what Sponger was doing to bring such a piece of news?

Lead. One of his mysteries, I suppose. "The Woman with Two Heads" has not been used yet, and I have got an "Escaped Mermaid" in type.

Clip. Use them; here is something else about Hon. Horatio Testy. By-the-bye, here's the "Chinese Ambassador," which has been waiting for a week—use it.

Lead. I want two or three short *pars.* to fill up the columns.

Clip. I will send them. (*Exit Leadwell.*) (*Writes.*) "A cave of wolves was discovered in Kansas the other day, and one hundred shot in one day. The surprising part of this statement is that the intrepid journalist who discovered the cave did not kill one thousand wolves while he was about it." That will do for one item.

"A scientific gent has discovered that if you blow on a scorpion in a vertical direction it will lie motionless. If the scientific gent will plant his shoe gently but firmly on the scorpion; it will also lie motionless, and for a much longer time." That will do for another.

"If this hot weather continues much longer, we shall be in great want of rain. The farmers are sure to make an outcry about it if there is not an alteration shortly." (*Rings bell.*)

Enter Boy.

Here, take these. (*Exit Boy.*)

He should be full by this. (*Leans back in his chair and takes out his watch.*) Just in time to—

Enter Boy.

Clip. (*takes up a book.*) What now, vampire?

Boy. Mr. Leadwell wants—

Clip. Avaunt! (*Flings book at him.*) What wants he more?

Boy. He wants nothing more, sir, he's got half a column too much, he says.

Clip. Away, then to thy nest. (*Exit Boy.*) Thank heaven I can now rest and have a little peace. (*Puts on his hat and exit.*)

CURTAIN.

WINNING A WIDOW

CHARACTERS

MRS. CUMMISKEY, *A middle-aged widow.*

MR. COSTELLO, *An old bachelor.*

SCENE.—*Mrs. C.'s dwelling. Table set. Mr. C. outside.*

Mr. C. Good-evenin' to you, ma'am.

Mrs. C. Good-evenin' to you, Mr. Costello.

Mr. C. It's fine weather we're havin', ma'am.

Mrs. C. It is that, thank God, but the winter's comin' at last, and it comes to all, both great and small.

Mr. C. Ah! but for all that it doesn't come to all alike. Now here are you, ma'am, fat, rosy, and good-lookin', equally swate as a summer greenin', a fall pippin or a winter russet—

Mrs. C. Arrah, hould your whist, now. Much an old bachelor like you knows about apples or women. But come in, Mr. Costello, an' take a cup o' tay with me, for I was only standin' be the door lookin' at the people passin' for company sake, like, and I'm sure the kittle must have sung itself hoarse. (*Mr. C. enters and sits.*)

Mr. C. It's very cozy ye are here, Mrs. Cummiskey.

Mrs. C. Yes. (*Lays the supper.*) It is that whin I do be havin' company.

Mr. C. Ah! it must be lonesome for you with only yer cat and the cup o' tay.

Mrs. C. Sure it is. But sit up to the table, Mr. Costello. Help yourself to this fish, and don't fureget the purtaties. Look at them: they're splittin' their sides wid laughin'. (*She pours tea.*)

Mr. C. I'm sensible of the comforts of a home, Mrs. Cummiskey, though I've none meself. Mind now, the difference between the taste o' tay made and sarved that way and the tay they gives you in an aitin'-house.

Mrs. C. Sure there's nothin' like a little home of yer own. I wonder yer never got marrit, Mr. Costello.

Mr. C. I was about to make the same remark in rifference to yerself, ma'am.

Mrs. C. God help us, aren't I a widder woman this seven years?

Mr. C. Ah, but it's thinkin' I was why ye didn't get marrit again?

Mrs. C. Well, it's sure I am (*thoughtfully setting down her teacup and raising her hand by way of emphasis*), there was no betther husband to any woman than him that's dead and gone, heaven save an' rest his sowl. He was that asy a child could do anything wid him, and he was as humorous as a monkey. You favor him very much, Mr. Costello. He was about your height, and complicted like you.

Mr. C. Ah!

Mrs. C. He often used to say to me in his banterin' way, Sure, Nora, what's the woruld to a man whin his wife is a widder, manin', you know, that all the temptations and luxuries of this life can never folly a man beyant the grave. Sure, Nora, says he, what's the woruld to a man whin his wife's a widder?

Mr. C. It was a sensible sayin' that. (*Helping himself to more fish.*)

Mrs. C. I mind the day John died. He knew everything to the last, and about four o'clock in the afthernoon—it was seventeen minutes past five exactly, be the clock, that he died—he says to me, Nora, says he, you've been a good wife, says he, an' I've been a good husband, says he, an' so there's no love lost atween us, says he, an' I could give ye a good characthur to any place, says he, an' I wish ye could do the same for me where I'm goin', says he; but it's case equal, says he, an' every dog has his day, an' some has a day an' a half, says he, an' says he, I'll know more in a bit than Father Corrigan himself, says he, but I'll say now, says he, that I've always been a true son of the Church, says he, so I'll not bother my brains about it; an' he says, says he, I lave ye in good hands, Nora, for I lave you in your hands, says he; an' if at any time ye see any wan ye like betther nor me, marry him, says he. Ah, Nora, says he, for the first time spakin' it solemn like, ah, Nora, what's the woruld to a man whin his wife's a widder? An' says he, I lave fifty dollars for masses, and the rest I lave to yourself, said he, an' I needn't tell ye to be a good mother to the childer', says he, for well ye know there are none. Ah, poor John! Will ye have another cup of tay, Mr. Costello?

Mr. C. It must have been very hard on ye (*passing cup*). Thank ye, ma'am, no more.

Mrs. C. It was hard, but time will tell. I must cast about me for my own livin'; and so I got intil this place an' here I am to-day. (*Both rise from the table and seat themselves before the fire.*)

Mr. C. Ah! an' here we are both of us this evenin'.

Mrs. C. Here we are, sure enough.

Mr. C. And so I mind ye of—of him, do I?

Mrs. C. That ye do. Ye favor him greatly. Dark complicated, an' the same plisint smile.

Mr. C. Now, with me sittin' here an' you sittin' there ferninst me, ye might almost think ye were marrit agin. (*Insinuatingly.*)

Mrs. C. Ah, go away now for a taze that ye are. (*Mussing her apron by rolling the corners of it.*)

Mr. C. I disremember what it was ye said about seein' any man you liked bettther nor him. (*Moving his chair nearer to that of the widow.*)

Mrs. C. He said, said he (*smoothing her apron over her knees*), Nora, said he, if anny time ye see anny man ye like bettther nor me, marry him, says he.

Mr. C. Did he say anything about anny one ye liked as good as him?

Mrs. C. I don't mind that he did. (*Reflectively, folding her hands in her lap.*)

Mr. C. I suppose he left that to yerself?

Mrs. C. Faith, an' I don't know, thin.

Mr. C. Div ye think ye like me as well as ye did him? (*Persuasively, leaning forward to look into the widow's eyes, which are cast down.*)

Mrs. C. Ah, go away now for a taze.

(*Straightening herself and playfully slapping Mr. Costello on the face. He moves his chair still nearer, and puts his arm around her waist.*)

Mr. C. Tell me, div ye like me as well as ye did him?

Mrs. C. I—I most—I most disremember now how much I liked him. (*Embarrassed.*)

Mr. C. Ah, now, don't be breakin' me heart. Answer me this question, Mrs. Cummiskey—Is your heart tender toward me?

Mrs. C. It is (*whispers*), an' there, now ye have it.

Mr. C. Glory! (*Kisses her.*)

Mrs. C. But, James, ye haven't told me yet how ye liked yer tay?

Mr. C. Ah, Nora, me jewel, the taste of that first kiss would take away the taste of all the tay that ever was brewed.

A CLOSE SHAVE

CHARACTERS

JOHN MARSH, *A bachelor.*

TONY, *His valet.*

Costumes.—Marsh, pajama suit, cotton night cap, slippers. Tony, trousers, short white jacket, slippers.

SCENE.—A bachelor's bedroom. Door, right. In center, back, a bed screened by curtains parting in the middle. Left, a toilet table. Right, a small table, chair, shaving materials, etc.

As the curtain rises, a clock strikes ten.

Marsh (in bed, with a cotton night-cap on, thrusts his head out between the curtains). I wonder what hour the clock struck just now. Where's that rascal? (Calls.) Tony! Tony!

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (calls). What time is it?

Tony (outside). Don't know!

Marsh (calls). Go and see, you numbskull!

Tony (outside, yawns). I'm in bed.

Marsh (calls). Get up! Quick, now!

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (speaks). That's the laziest fellow I ever saw. I make him sleep in the next room so as to be within call. Without exception he is about the sleepiest fellow I ever met, and as stupid as a donkey, but

with all his clumsiness he is faithful and puts up with all my impatience and, sometimes, ill temper. (*Pause.*) What can he be about? (*Calls.*) Tony!!

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (calls). Do you want me to come and shake you up? What time is it?

Tony (outside). Ten o'clock.

Marsh (speaks). Ten! Great Cæsar! I am to be married at eleven, and my best man is to be here at half past ten. (*Calls.*) Tony!

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (calls angrily). Why didn't you call me an hour ago?

Tony (outside). Had no orders!

Marsh (calls). Didn't you know I was to be married this morning?

Tony (outside). Never told me so!

Marsh (calls). Never told you! Didn't you know it?

Tony (outside). Never know nothing but what I'm told.

Marsh (calls). Well, you confounded fool, I tell you now! Do you hear me?

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (calls impatiently). Quick, now! Bring in my clothes and shoes. Hurry,—come and help me dress. (*Gets out of bed.*)

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (speaks excitedly). Oh, if I only had time, I'd trounce you, my fine fellow. Ah! I must shave, I'd better begin at once—no hot water—no matter—(*lathers his face*). The idea of sleeping so late on one's wedding day! I wonder what Anna Maria would say? Anna Maria (*musingly*)—nice girl, tall, rather dark, but then—richest heiress in Podunk—so her father says. Met her at Rockaway—wild waves—beach by moonlight—spoons for two—the old story. Oh!—soap in my eye! How it smarts! (*Calls.*) Tony!

Tony (outside). Aye, aye, sir!

Marsh (calls). Aye, aye! Come here, you scamp, and wipe my eye!

Tony (outside). Can't do it. I'm brushing your coat.

Marsh (speaks, excitedly). Oh, if I only had time! I'd brush you!

Enter Tony.

Tony. Here I am!

Marsh. What's the matter now?

Tony. I've come to wipe your eye.

Marsh (excited). Oh! If I only had time! Turn round, you villain!

Tony. Aye, aye, sir. (*Turns his back to Marsh, who gives him a kick.*) Ah! (*Laughs.*) Ain't he quaint!

Marsh. Off with you! fetch my clothes. (*Exit Tony.*)

Yes, she's a daisy. Her father promised me a splendid four-story house in Podunk as a wedding present. Luckily, I have a friend there, a lawyer, to whom I wrote, asking him to find out and tell me all about her,—and the house, of course. I've had no answer yet, but I suppose it's all right. The old man was a really nice, good-natured fellow. He was so particular in asking me all about myself, my means and prospects. He said that Anna Maria was so sensitive, so amiable, and had received many offers, but had never appeared to be favorably impressed by any of her suitors until now. There was almost a tear in his eye when he thought of having to part with her, but her happiness was his whole object in life. I assured him that I would do all in my power to make her life a happy one. And yet, I wish I had news from Podunk.

Enter Tony.

Tony. Here I am.

Marsh. What have you got now?

Tony. Your hat and cane—

Marsh. Blockhead! Do you suppose I need to be married with a cane? Oh! If I only had time! Turn round!

Tony. Aye, aye, sir! (*Turns round.*)

Marsh (*kicks him*). There! Now fetch my clothes.

Tony (*aside*). Ah! (*Laughs.*) Ain't he quaint! (*Starts toward door, returns.*) Oh, I forgot—here's a letter for you.

Marsh (*impatient*). Put it on the table, and fetch my razor—hurry, now.

Tony. Which razor? The white handle, or the black handle—or, perhaps—

Marsh (*enraged*). Any razor, you dolt! Off with you. (*Exit Tony; reënters in a hurry.*)

Tony. Here's your razor.

Marsh (*commencing to shave*). Say, Tony, are you going to keep that jacket on you all day?

Tony. No—Sir! I'm going to take it off—soon going to bed again—

Marsh (*starts; cuts his face*). Back to bed? Oh! I've cut myself!

Tony. That's nothing, let it bleed.

Marsh. Be off with you, put on your new livery. You'll have to ride on the box with the driver. It will look well, you know.

Tony. But, sir—

Marsh. I'll give you ten minutes to change your clothes. Now—fly, or I'll massacre you. (*Exit Tony.*) It's dreadful to have to hurry so; confound it! There's another gash! How it bleeds! Hang the razor. (*Dashes it on the floor.*) Now I'll have to wait till these gashes stop bleeding. (*Sits down.*)

Enter Tony.

Tony. Here's your clothes—

Marsh. Put them on that chair, and—

Tony. You seem in a desperate hurry to get married.

Marsh. Hurry, indeed! and people waiting for me.

Tony. I got married once.

Marsh. You? Well, I declare!

Tony. Yes. But it was a failure—an awful fizzle. (*Sits down.*) Oh, a distressing story. You see, I married a girl from 'way down Alabama. Sweet as a ripe orange, and about the same complexion. Oh, she was a bloomer!

Marsh. Orange—and a bloomer—a complete wedding wreath, ready made. Did she fade? What separated you?

Tony. Only a little difference of taste and opinion.

Marsh. That seems rather a slender excuse for such an important step as separation between man and wife.

Tony. Slender! not so slender as you think. Do you chew tobacco?

Marsh. I? Well, occasionally.

Tony. Occasionally? This is about the first time I've seen you without it in your mouth. Well, now—suppose your future bride had an abhorrence of tobacco, and asked you to give up the nasty habit.

Marsh. I think I would, without hesitation. She certainly would think I had very little love for her if I didn't.

Tony. That was about the trouble with us.

Marsh. What? Did you chew tobacco, and refused to quit it?

Tony. Not much! The shoe was on the other foot.

Marsh. You don't say! What! she—chewed?

Tony. She ate garlic,—was dreadfully fond of it. I can't bear the horrible stuff. The third day after our wedding, I said, Seraphina Maria—shut down on the garlic. Choose for yourself,—Anthony and bliss, or garlic and divorce. She chose the garlic, and that ended it. Say! does the future Mrs. Marsh like garlic?

Marsh. You impudent beggar! Get out of this! Be off and dress yourself. Oh! If I only had time! Here! Turn around.

Tony. Aye, aye, sir. (*Turns his back to Marsh*

who kicks him.) Holy smoke! (*Aside.*) Ain't he quaint! (*Exit Tony.*)

Marsh. Gracious! These gashes will never stop bleeding. Oh! the letter! I forgot all about it. (*Takes letter, opens and reads.*) "My dear Marsh"—(*speaks*) from the Podunk lawyer; just in time; let's see what he says. (*Reads.*) "I hasten to reply to your inquiries about the young lady, and the house you mention." (*Speaks.*) I had no idea that I was a nervous man, but at this crisis, this turning-point in my life, I actually tremble at the perusal of words that may seal my fate irrevocably. Be still, my heart! Now for the report from Podunk. My sight grows dim, but courage! (*Reads.*) "The house is not a four-story one by any means; who ever said so added, not only *one*, but *three* stories to its real dimensions. It boasts of just *one*, in fact, a shanty, and in the last stages of dilapidation." (*Speaks.*) Jerusalem! (*Reads.*) "The young lady in question is by no means deficient in stories of another and rather unsavory kind. She was very popular,—in fact, quite a general pet,—with the officers of the 99th cavalry when that regiment was stationed here." (*Speaks excitedly.*) Too many stories to the woman, and too few to the house! A pretty story, altogether, upon my word. The house, a shanty, a dilapidated shanty. The house which had raised up visions of future ease and comfort, and rent-free wedded bliss, a myth! What a liar the old man must be! There must be some mistake, and yet, my friend is very explicit. Yes, I *must* believe it. And Anna Maria, so sweet—so gentle—can it be? Oh! What a fool I must have been to pick up a girl on the beach and be so completely bamboozled by a flirting schemer! Sold! Ignominiously sold! What a lucky escape. (*Calls.*) Tony!!

Enter Tony.

Tony. Here I am!

Marsh. Pick up that razor! (*Tony does so.*) Now

kiss it! (*Tony, astonished, does so.*) Kiss it again. Good! Hand it to me.

Tony (*hands it*). There. (*Aside.*) Oh, ain't he quaint!

Marsh (*takes it*). Blessed razor! But for thee, I should have been sacrificed, betrayed, swindled! As thou hast cut me, so cut I the mendacious Anna Maria. (*To Tony.*) Hand me that night-cap!

Tony. Ha! Ha! Going to get married in a night-cap?

Marsh. Hush up, you blockhead. I'm going to bed again. Be off! Never mind your livery and—

Tony. I'm off to bed—hurrah!

Marsh. And, mind you! If anyone knocks or rings, let them knock. If you open the door to a living soul to-day, I'll kill you. Turn around. (*Tony turns, Marsh kicks him.*) There. Now be off—

Tony. Thunder! That was a corker! (*Aside.*) Oh! Ain't he quaint! (*Exit.*)

Marsh. Now for bed, and peace and quiet. Thus ends my dream of love and matrimony! The beautiful house in Podunk melts from my view like a phantom castle in the air. The sweet and bashful maiden of my hopes and desires is transformed into a repellent and mendacious flirt. The dream is past—and—what an escape! If Tony had called me one short hour earlier, I should now be married,—have flung away my whole future, and to-morrow—what an awakening to misery and disappointment! Thank goodness I have been saved that bitterness! If there be any young men like myself present, beware of three things:—Rockaway Beach, moonlight and stray sirens. (*Jumps into bed, thrusts head out between the curtains.*) But, by the holy poker, that was A CLOSE SHAVE.

CURTAIN.

BOB O'LINK.

THE LETTER

CHARACTERS

SQUIRE EGAN, *A country squire.*

ANDY, *A new Irish servant.*

SCENE.—*The squire's office.*

Squire. Well, Andy; you went to the postoffice, as I ordered you?

Andy. Yes, sir.

Squire. Well, what did you find?

Andy. A most imperthinent fellow, indade, sir.

Squire. How so?

Andy. Says I, as dacent like as a gentleman, "I want a letther, sir, if you plase." "Who do you want it for?" said the posth-masther, as ye call him. "I want a letther, sir, if you plase," said I. "And who do you want it for?" said he, again. "And what's that to you?" said I.

Squire. You blockhead, what did he say to that?

Andy. He laughed at me, sir, and said he could not tell what letter to give me, unless I told him the direction.

Squire. Well, you told him, then, did you?

Andy. "The directions I got," said I, "was to get a letther here—that's the directions." "Who gave you the directions?" says he. "The masther," said I. "And who is your masther?" said he. "What consarn is that o' yourn?" said I.

Squire. Did he break your head then?

Andy. No, sir. "Why, you stupid rascal," said he, "if you don't tell me his name, how can I give you his letther?" "You could give it, if you liked," said I; "only you are fond of axing impident questions, becasse

you think I'm simple." "Get out o' this!" said he. "Your masther must be as great a goose as yourself, to send such a missenger."

Squire. Well, how did you save my honor, Andy?

Andy. "Bad luck to your impidence!" said I. "Is it Squire Egan you dare to say goose to?" "Oh, Squire Egan's your master?" said he. "Yes," said I. "Have you anything to say agin' it?"

Squire. You got the letter, then, did you?

Andy. "Here's a letther for the squire," says he. "You are to pay me elevenpence posthage." "What 'ud I pay 'leven pence for?" said I. "For *postage*," says he. "Didn't I see you give that gentleman a letther for fourpence this blessed minute?" said I; "and a bigger letther than this? Do you think I'm a fool?" says I. "Here's a fourpence for you—and give me the letther."

Squire. I wonder he did not break your skull and let some light into it.

Andy. "Go 'long, you stupid thafe!" says he; because I wouldn't let him *chate* your honor.

Squire. Well, well, give me the letter.

Andy. I haven't it, sir. He wouldn't give it to me, sir.

Squire. *Who* wouldn't give it to you?

Andy. That old *chate* beyant the town.

Squire. Didn't you pay what he asked?

Andy. Arrah, sir, why would I let you be chated, when he was selling them before my face for fourpence a piece?

Squire. Go back, you scoundrel, or I'll horsewhip you.

Andy. He'll murther me, if I say another word to him about the letther; he swore he would.

Squire. *I'll* do it, if he don't, if you're not back in less than an hour. (*Exit.*)

Andy. Oh, that the like o' me should be murthered for defending the *charrackter* of my masther! It's not

I'll go to dale with that bloody chate again. I'll off to Dublin, and let the letther rot on his dirty hands, bad luck to him!

WILLIAM B. FOWLE.

"LEAST SAID, SOONEST MENDED"

CHARACTERS

MR. SILENT.

MRS. PRATTLE.

MRS. SILENT.

SCENE.—*Mr. Silent reading; enter Mrs. Silent in a flurry.*

Mrs. Silent. Oh, my dear, only think! Selina Audrey is going to marry Mr. Frederick Jones. Did you ever hear of such a thing?

Mr. Silent. I heard it was settled three weeks ago.

Mrs. Silent. You heard it was settled three weeks ago! And why did you not tell me?

Mr. Silent. What was the use of telling you? I knew you would not be asked to the wedding, or there would be plenty of time to buy a new bonnet if you should.

Mrs. Silent. What is the use? That is just what you always say. As if one did not like to know what one's neighbors were about. I declare I am quite ashamed of my ignorance very often. I never hear that anyone is dying, or going to be married, till it is all over. And where did you hear this?

Mr. Silent. Out hunting.

Mrs. Silent. Yes, all news is hatched or told out hunting. Don't talk of tea-table gossip, it is nothing to hunting coffee-houses. But I declare I don't see the use of your going hunting; you never tell me anything.

Mr. Silent. What is the use of spreading reports?

Mrs. Silent. That is just what you always say, and

so I never know anything. It seems so unkind not to congratulate one's friends on a wedding in the family.

Mr. Silent. Ten to one if there is not more cause for condolence.

Mrs. Silent. Dear me! Have you heard anything about Mr. Jones?

(Mr. Silent continues reading.)

Mrs. Silent (impatiently). My dear, why don't you answer? Have you heard anything of Mr. Frederick Jones?

Mr. Silent. Yes.

Mrs. Silent. What have you heard?

Mr. Silent. A great deal.

Mrs. Silent. But what, my dear—what? You are so tiresome; one has to drag every word from you by question upon question. What have you heard of Mr. Jones?

Mr. Silent. That he is a bachelor.

Mrs. Silent. I knew that before. What else?

Mr. Silent. His mother lives in Boston.

Mrs. Silent. I knew that too. What else did you hear?

Mr. Silent. They say he is short.

Mrs. Silent. Pooh! I heard that before too. Is he rich?

Mr. Silent. I have no special opportunity of knowing.

Mrs. Silent. What do people say about his fortune?

Mr. Silent. Some say it is large.

Mrs. Silent. Is that all you know about it? Then I can tell you, my dear, something you have not heard before. He has gambled away all his fortune, and has not a dollar left.

Mr. Silent. I heard that a month ago.

Mrs. Silent. And never told me! not even just now when I questioned you so closely. You really are enough to make an automaton scold. Where did you hear it?

Mr. Silent. At the Exchange one morning.

Mrs. Silent. There, that is just as I said before; you never tell me anything. I don't see the use of being your wife, or of your going to the Exchange, if you are never to tell me anything. Mr. Prattle tells his wife all he hears, as husbands should.

Mr. Silent. Better if he did not.

Mrs. Silent. I don't see that at all, my dear. What are tongues for, if not to be used?

Mr. Silent. We have two ears to one tongue, which proves that we should only tell half what we hear.

Mrs. Silent. I don't see that at all. We have two legs to one head. Does that mean that we are to walk twice as much as we think?

Mr. Silent. Most do who are not bedridden.

Mrs. Silent. We should never know anything about our neighbors if that was to be the case; besides, you never tell more than a quarter of what you hear; no, not even that.

Mr. Silent. More than enough, if I do; your neighbors will get on quite as well without your talking of them.

Mrs. Silent. But it makes one look so foolish. You told me the other day that Mrs. Hampden had a boy, but never told me she had twins, and there was I saying all manner of silly things in consequence.

Mr. Silent. You need not have said anything. Least said is soonest mended.

Mrs. Silent. Not say anything when one's friend has twins, Mr. Silent? Was there ever anyone like you? Why, you are worse than a heathen. Then you told me Miss Welsh was going to be married, and when I went to congratulate her, lo, and behold! it was all off again; and she looked red, and I looked red, and we all looked red and foolish together.

Mr. Silent. That comes of meddling in your neighbor's concerns. Had you held your tongue, as I do, no one would have looked red or foolish.

Mrs. Silent. Hold my tongue when my friend's

daughter is going to be married! Did anyone in their senses ever say the like? Indeed, my dear, you grow worse and worse. If you had told me that the match was off, I should not have seemed so like an idiot.

Mr. Silent. You never asked me that.

Mrs. Silent (pettishly). Ask! that is always the way with you: I must make out a list of our friends and neighbors, and ask you every morning whether each one is well or ill, going to die, or going to be married.

Mr. Silent. Better not; let them alone. Don't meddle with others, and they will not meddle with you.

Mrs. Silent. And so never know what is going on in the world!

Mr. Silent. The world would go on quite as well, and you much better.

Mrs. Silent. I cannot say I think so, my dear, and wish you would tell me all you hear.

Mr. Silent. I would rather not, my dear: the country would soon be in a blaze if I did.

Mrs. Silent. Well, my dear, I must say it is very unkind to be so uncommunicative. Mrs. Prattle always knows everything.

Mr. Silent. And tells everything, too: she may pay for this one of these days.

Mrs. Silent. Mr. Silent, what can you mean?

Mr. Silent. Time may show.

Mrs. Silent. There, that is just like you; giving no answer at all, or one that tells nothing. But here comes Mrs. Prattle herself.

Enter Mrs. Prattle, who shakes hands with Mrs. Silent, but, in her hurry, overlooks Mr. Silent.

Mrs. Prattle. Oh, my dear Mrs. Silent, oh!

Mrs. Silent. My dear Mrs. Prattle, what is the matter; you are panting and trembling like a coursed hare. Have you heard of any more marriages?

Mrs. Pratt. Oh, my dear Mrs. Silent, pray never name the word marriage again: I shall hate it to my

dying day. Oh, dear! we are in such trouble! such distress! Would you believe it? Mr. Frederick Jones is in a great rage, because someone has set about that he has lost all his fortune by gambling, and he talks of prosecuting Mr. Prattle and myself: only think how shocking—I, a lady, to be dragged into a court of justice. I am sure I did not set it about; I only repeated what Prattle told me, and he heard it out hunting, and I told Mrs. Ready and her nieces and Mrs. Finch and her daughters not to repeat it. I am sure everybody knew it as well as we did—the whole town was talking about it ten days ago. I am sure you must have heard it, my dear.

Mrs. Silent (looking reproachfully at her husband). No, indeed, Mrs. Prattle, I never heard anything of it till this morning: my husband is not like yours, he never tells me anything.

Mrs. Pratt. I wish Mr. Prattle had not told me this. Only think, our names put in the papers, and the counsel saying all kinds of things, and everyone going to hear: and then perhaps to pay large damages beside. I am sure I did not mean any harm and would make twenty apologies. Do you think Mr. Silent could speak to Mr. Jones?

Mrs. Silent (turning to her husband). Do you hear, my dear, the trouble poor Mrs. Prattle is in?

Mr. Silent. That comes of talking.

Mrs. Silent. She only said what everybody else said.

Mr. Silent. Better if everybody held their tongues.

Mrs. Silent. Oh! my dear, what a very stupid world it would be then: as dull as a Quakers' meeting. But do you hear, Mr. Jones is going to prosecute Mrs. Prattle for saying he gambled away all his fortune?

Mr. Silent. Yes, my dear, I knew that an hour ago.

Mrs. Silent. And never told me!

Mr. Silent. No, my dear, and if Mr. Prattle had not told his wife they would not have been threatened with prosecution now. This comes of talking, as I said before. I have no advice to give on the subject

further than to recommend to your notice an old proverb which suits your case, and recommends keeping the mouth shut. Good-morning. (*Exit Mr. Silent.*)

Mrs. Prattle (sharply). People who are too selfish and indolent to give aid can give advice and quote proverbs! Good-morning. (*Exit Mrs. Prattle.*)

Mrs. Silent. I wonder what proverb he meant? Eh! now I know. Well, perhaps if Mrs. Prattle had not talked so, she would not have got into this trouble. We must all take care what we say. Oh! How glad I am that my husband doesn't tell me all he hears. If he did, I should be in just as much trouble as Mrs. Prattle. Oh, he's right! What an escape for me! Yes—"Least said, soonest mended."

CURTAIN.

ELLEN PICKERING.

JONATHAN'S DAUGHTERS

CHARACTERS

MRS. JEMIMA WIGGINS, *An old woman from the country.*
 MARTHA SLYKER, }
 ARABELLA SLYKER, } *Her nieces residing in the city.*
 FANNY SLYKER. }

SCENE.—*A room. Aunt Jemima Wiggins seated with her bonnet on, a bandbox and bundle beside her.*

Aunt Jemima. Wall, it never entered my head that any of Jonathan Slyker's children would act the way that one did. Why, she didn't even ax me to take off my bunnit, but bounced eout of the room like as if she could skurcelly endure to look at me. Wall, I calkilate she'll rue that arter awhile. I've got consid'able money to give away to somebody, but I'm purty sure it won't go to anybody that's ashamed of me, or to anybody

that flounces eout of the room the way that one did. I know my clothes aren't jest the finest (*smoothes down her dress*), but I calkilate I've a heap more money than they have. I have hearn tell that they were right poor, and I thought as heow I'd help 'em some. But it's precious little help they'll get from me if the rest of 'em don't act better'n that one did. She didn't even offer to shake hands with me when I told her who I was, but said she'd go eout and tell her sisters. And I think she's got the idee into her head that I'm hard of hearin'. I s'pose that was because I talked loud to her, and mebbe because I'm purty old. Wall, I can hear as well as anybody, but if they want to think that I'm deaf I guess I'd better jest let 'em think so. Mebbe I can find eout more about 'em in that way. There's some of the gals acomin' in neow. I wonder if they'll ax me to take off my bunnit.

Enter Martha and Arabella.

Martha (speaking very loud). I have seen Arabella and she is inclined to think that you are an impostor. But she has come in with me; she can speak for herself.

Arabella (speaking very loud). My sister says that you claim to be a sister of my father's. We can hardly believe this, as we have never seen you, nor have we heard anything in regard to my father's sister for a great many years. There are a great many tramps going around now and we are inclined to think that you are a tramp.

Aunt Jemima (springing up and speaking excitedly). Who's a tramp—who? Your Aunt Jemima a tramp! Can I believe my ears? Can it be possible that Jonathan Slyker's childer should talk to me in this way?

Arabella. We must, therefore, request you to gather up your traps and be off.

Martha. Yes, you must go. We don't want you here.

Aunt Jemima. Wall, I can go. Yeour Aunt Jemima isn't one that hangs areound a house very long

arter she's been told to go. I heard yeou were in purty poor sarcumstances and I thought as heow I'd come deown and see heow yeou were gettin' along.

Arabella (angrily). Don't attempt to insult us now by telling us that you heard that we were in poor circumstances. I am now, more than ever, convinced that you are an impostor.

Aunt Jemima. Yeou are! Wall, there's no use in talkin' to yeou, so I'll go. (*Takes up her bundle and bandbox.*)

Enter Fanny.

Fanny. How is this? Martha, didn't you say that Aunt Jemima had come to see us, and now why is it that she is going away so soon?

Martha (in a lower tone). We don't want her here. She's a rough, countrified old woman and we should be ashamed to have our friends see her. Anyhow, we have enough to do to keep ourselves without keeping this poor old woman. She's hard of hearing—she can't hear what I'm saying now. We told her that she was an old tramp, although we know well enough that she is our Aunt Jemima.

Aunt Jemima (aside). Ah, ha! And these air Jonathan Slyker's darters! Well! well! (*To the others.*) Yes, I'll be a goin'. As I said afore, I don't stay long areound a house arter I have been ordered eout.

Fanny (speaking in a loud voice and taking hold of her bundle and bandbox). Indeed, you'll not go.

Aunt Jemima. Heow's this? Ordered me eout of the house and neow yeou want to rob me of my best clothes too! What kind of childer did Jonathan Slyker have, anyheow?

Fanny. I don't want to rob you.

Aunt Jemima. Wall, I should say it looked like it when yeou're a grabbin' my bundle and bandbox. I've got a new Sunday gown in the bundle and a bran new bunnit in the bandbox.

Fanny (still speaking very loud). You don't under-

stand me. I don't want to rob you; I want you to stay. I know you are our Aunt Jemima, and Martha and Arabella know it too, but they are trying to be as ugly as possible. I have as much interest here as they have, and I say you must stay.

Martha (in a lower tone). Fanny, what are you saying and what do you mean? We don't want any old scarecrow here. We know she's our Aunt Jemima, but what would Mr. Harper and Mr. Anderson say if they should see her? You know we are as poor as we want to be now, and we don't want to do anything to lessen our matrimonial chances. Don't be a dunce, Fanny. Let her go when she wants to.

Fanny (in a lower tone). Indeed, I shall do nothing of the kind. Wouldn't it be an everlasting disgrace to turn out our aunt—our father's only sister? You and Arabella must be entirely heartless.

Aunt Jemima. No, I can't think of stayin'. I'll go to some of the big hotels and stay till to-morrow. I somehow kinder don't like the idee of hangin' areound a house arter bein' ordered eout.

Fanny. But you *must* stay. (*Takes hold of her bundle and bandbox again.*) You must not go away under these circumstances. They are afraid that their beaux will see you and be horrified. They are afraid that your presence here will in some way spoil their matrimonial prospects.

Aunt Jemima. Oh, is that it? (*Laughs.*) Ha! ha! Wall, I'm sure I'll not do that. I'll see the beaux and give them a talkin' to. I'll tell them that the gals are Jonathan Slyker's darters, and bein' Jonathan Slyker's they'll be likely to make purty good wives. Oh, no, if that's all that's in the way I won't do nothin' to give 'em a set back. Of course I think they're a leetle stuck up and that's a leetle eout of place for poor people, but seein' as they're Jonathan Slyker's darters I reckon they'll come out all right. (*Sets down her bundle and bandbox.*)

Arabella (angrily and in a loud tone). We want you to take your bundles and go.

Aunt Jemima. Yeou do! Wall, I'll be agoin'. I hain't used to hangin' around a house very long arter bein' ordered eout. (*Takes up her bundle and bandbox.*) Yes, I'll be agoin'. I do wonder if these air Jonathan Slyker's childer. I do wonder if they have no feelin's at all for their poor old aunt. (*Sets down her bundle and bandbox, takes out a bandanna and wipes her eyes. Pretends to weep.*) Oh, dear! I only had one brother and that brother was Jonathan Slyker. (*Wipes her eyes.*) I wonder if these air Jonathan's childer?

Fanny (in a lower tone to Martha and Arabella). Aren't you ashamed of yourselves? I declare it's too bad. See! poor Aunt Jemima is crying. You have disgraced yourselves. (*To Aunt Jemima.*) Don't cry, Aunt Jemima. You *shan't* go until you have made us a visit. I have as much authority here as Martha or Arabella and I say you *shall* stay.

Aunt Jemima (wipes her eyes, then takes up her bundle and bandbox). Wall, no, I don't know as I'd like to stay arter bein' ordered eout.

Fanny. But you will be my guest. I haven't ordered you out.

Aunt Jemima. No, yeou dear little soul, yeou haven't. Yeou're a noble girl, but I can't say so much for yeour sisters. And the question comes at me again (*indicating Martha and Arabella*), can it be that these gals air Jonathan Slyker's darters? As I said afore, I don't hang around a house very long arter bein' ordered eout, but I'll set deown my bundle and bandbox for a few minutes until I tell yeou somethin'. (*Sets them down.*) I'm yeour Aunt Jemima, and yeou gals (*indicating Martha and Arabella*) know it as well as I do. I ain't hard of hearin', but that gal (*pointing to Martha*) seemed to think so when I came in—I reckon it was because I'm purty old—and I jest let

her think so There wasn't no use in hollerin' at me the way yeou did. I heard all yeour talk among yeour-selves. Neow, I want to tell yeou somethin' more; I heard yeou folks was purty poor.

Martha (angrily). Who said we were poor?

Aunt Jemima. Oh, well, it don't make any difference who said it; I know it's a fact. Yeou're only tryin' to keep up appearances till yeou git married. And, as I said afore, I won't stand in yeour way. But I'll tell yeou the rest. I have twenty thousand dollars in my own right. Yeou didn't know that, and yeou'd skurcely think that an old woman, dressed the way I am, would have so much money. Wall, it's so, and I thought I'd come deown and see Jonathan's gals, and as I have no other relatives I thought I'd share my money with 'em if they'd treat me right. Wall, two of 'em acted mighty bad, and one of 'em—that's this one—(*indicating Fanny*)—acted like—wall, she acted like as if she had common sense and some feelin' for her poor old aunt. So she'll go home with me. (*To Fanny.*) Won't yeou?

Fanny. Oh, yes, Aunt Jemima; I will be glad to do so.

Aunt Jemima. Yes, yeou're a dear, good child, and all the money—twenty thousand dollars—will go to yeou at my death. I won't have more'n twenty-five cents apiece for these gals (*indicating Martha and Arabella*) for they've treated me like as if I was a Hot-tentot.

Martha. Oh, Aunt Jemima, can't you forgive us?

Arabella. Oh, Aunt Jemima, we really didn't know!

Aunt Jemima. No, I reckon not! It's "Aunt Jemima" neow—it was "yeou old tramp" a few minutes ago. Wall, Fanny, we'll be agoin'. As I said afore, I hain't never been used to hangin' areound a house very long arter I have been ordered eout. (*Takes up her bundle and bandbox.*) Yes, we'll be agoin'. (*To audience.*) But before we do go I jest want to ax

yeou, do yeou railyly believe that these two (*indicating Martha and Arabella*) air Jonathan's darters, or only tramps?

CURTAIN.

H. E. McBRIDE.

THE HEIRS

CHARACTERS

MR. FRENCH, *A wealthy old gentleman.*

JIM,

MR. TWIG,

BOB HEARTY,

FRANK WHIFFY.

} *His heirs.*

SCENE.—*Mr. French standing before the open fireplace of his library warming his hands.*

Mr. French. Well, here I am, a rich, old man, without a child, and, as far as my knowledge extends, without a relation. I have hit upon a singular method of finding out my heirs; and I have some hope that it will prove successful. I have caused my death to be published in the papers, and have advertised for my heirs to appear this morning and prove their claims. I shall pretend to be my steward; and I think I shall be amused, if not enlightened, by this first opportunity of seeing eleventh cousins. Hark! here may be one of them. (*A knocking is heard at the door. He opens it and lets in a raw country fellow.*)

Jim. Air you Mr. French's steward, hey?

Mr. F. I have the care of his property, sir.

Jim. Well, I'm come to git my *shear* on 't.

Mr. F. Pray, how were you related to him?

Jim. You see, my mother's aunt's husband's sister was second cousin to Mr. French's grandfather; at

least so they tell'd me, and our squire said how I ought to look arter the property, or somebody else would cut me out.

Mr. F. Pray, did you ever see Mr. French?

Jim. No, but they tell me he was a clever old jockey.

Mr. F. He was a good friend to me.

Jim. Well, my old daddy, if I get his money, I'll not let you go a-begging. Can you curry a horse, hold a plow, or drive a team? No, I guess not; but you'd soon learn.

Mr. F. I'm too old to take lessons in any new science. (*Someone knocks.*) But someone is coming. Please to step into the next room for a few moments. (*He does so, and Mr. French opens the door and admits Mr. Twig.*)

Twig. What's your business here?

Mr. F. I am the steward of the late Mr. French.

Twig. You mean you *were* his steward; for you are no longer so. You may clear out.

Mr. F. Sir!

Twig. I am owner here, sir, and have no further need of your services.

Mr. F. Who may you be, sir?

Twig. The heir of Mr. French, sir. Have you the keys of his safe, etc.? Come, give up, surrender and begone.

Mr. F. Why, you would not turn me out of doors, sir?

Twig. No; you may go of your own accord.

Mr. F. I lived with Mr. French from his birth till now, and he always treated me kindly.

Twig. He kept you too long and treated you too well for the interests of his heir. Come, sir, pack up and begone. I shall make clean work of it when I get possession.

Mr. F. I should think you would feel more respect for the feelings of Mr. French than to—

Twig. Respect for a fiddlestick! the old scoundrel is where his feelings can't be hurt by anything I may do.

Mr. F. Yes, he is. (*Knocking again.*) But someone knocks. Please to walk into the next room for a few moments.

Twig. Yes; I should like to look around a little and see what the old fellow has left me. (*He retires, and Mr. French lets in Frank Whiffy.*)

Frank. Well, who are you, old boy, eh?

Mr. F. The steward of the late Mr. French.

Frank. Oh, aye, yes, true! Well, I shall relieve you from your care. I say, old boy, can I get at any of the shiners, hey?

Mr. F. No; they are all under lock and key.

Frank. No specie payments, hey? Well, no matter, if his bills are current. Come, hand us over some bank rags, if you've nothing better.

Mr. F. Pray, who are you, sir? and what are your claims to the estate which is left in trust with me?

Frank. What was the old fellow worth? Will he cut up well, hey? Why did he not die ten years ago, hey? And so give me a chance to live. I tried once to break his neck for him; but he would not let me do him the favor, you see; and so I've been running in debt ever since on the strength of my expectations.

Mr. F. He would never have harmed you.

Frank. No, I suppose not; for he did not want my money, as I did his. But, come, let's have a hunt for the needful. (*Knocking again.*)

Mr. F. Presently. Someone knocks. Please to walk into that room till I see what is wanted.

Frank. Well, make haste, old square-sail, and let's see what luck there is about the house. (*Exit Frank, and Mr. French lets in Bob Hearty.*)

Bob. Are you the steward of Mr. French?

Mr. F. I was so. You know he is dead, I suppose?

Bob. Yes; and I am sorry for it.

Mr. F. Why? Are you not one of his heirs?

Bob. They tell me so; but I should rather have been one of his friends.

Mr. F. Did you know him?

Bob. Not personally. I have heard my mother speak of him. You have lived long with him?

Mr. F. Yes, very long.

Bob. He loved you, they say.

Mr. F. Yes; as he did himself.

Bob. Well, why didn't he leave you his property? Did he die suddenly?

Mr. F. He had no mind to make a will.

Bob. What heirs have put in claims to his estate?

Mr. F. Several are now in the house. I am shocked at their disrespect for his memory, more than at their unfeeling treatment of myself.

Bob. I could wish my claims were the best, that I might disappoint them. Say, how nearly are they related? I am only a cousin's nephew; and that, you know, is a distant remove.

Mr. F. I would you were nearer; for then a faithful old servant might not be turned out of doors, as I shall certainly be.

Bob. My chance is so small I should not have called had I not been in the city for the purpose of embarking for a foreign land to try my fortune. But, look ye, my honest friend, I have obtained a small advance to send my old mother, and she will share it with you for the sake of your good old master, whom she recollects; and I shall, perhaps, return before you need any more aid. If I do not, take the will for the deed. There is the purse (*giving it*), with directions for finding my mother. God bless you! Never let poverty make you unfaithful; and it seems you are in no danger of being made unfeeling by the possession of too much wealth.

Mr. F. Stop a moment, my generous fellow, I hear wrangling in the next room, and may need your protection.

Bob. You shall have it.

Jim, Twig, and Frank burst into the room, contending with great violence.

Twig. The title is mine by one degree of kindred, at least, and I will have one-half, or the whole.

Frank. That remains to be proved. Give me a quarter, and the shark and the bear may fight for the rest.

Mr. F. Gentlemen, do not contend; it will be as well to ascertain whether your relative is dead before you come to blows for the succession.

Twig. Old Hunks, how happens it that your master hung your portrait up in his parlor and left no portrait of himself? I was in hopes to have seen some likeness of the old fool.

Mr. F. The old fool kept no other portrait than mine; and this, I hope, will satisfy you of his attachment to me, and entitle me to some consideration when you obtain possession of his immense wealth.

Twig. Yes, old Judas, you shall have the portrait for your share of the property.

Frank. And then, old Scrub, you may hang yourself by the side of it as soon as you please.

Jim. You are too hard upon the old man. Here, old one, give me your fist. If I get the property I'll give you a turkey every Thanksgiving, and a mess of pork and beans every Fast Day, as long as you live, if you don't live too long.

Mr. F. I am obliged to you, my friends, but I shall not probably claim your generous promises. It is time to undeceive you. I am the steward of Mr. French, but Mr. French has always been his own steward.

Jim. Then I'm dished.

Mr. F. Yes, before my mess of beans is—

Frank. I may go hang myself at once.

Mr. F. Yes; on the other side of my picture, if you are so inclined.

Twig. I'm twigged, or my name is not Jeremy Twig.

Mr. F. Yes, your twig is too far from the stock, and

too gnarly for my notion. Good-by to you, worthy representatives of Mr. French. (*They hurry out.*)

Bob. Good-by, old gentleman, I am sorry I shall not have a chance to aid you. You must take the will for the deed, as I said before.

Mr. F. My generous fellow, you are my heir from this moment. Go not to a foreign clime to risk your life for the honorable purpose of assisting a beloved mother. I will see that her remaining days are as happy as kindness and wealth can make them; and I will risk my own happiness in the hands of my adopted son. I have been my own steward a great while, and now I will be yours.

BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE

A Negro Dialogue

CHARACTERS

POMPEY SQUIB, *Editor of the "Bungtown Roarer."*

GINGER BLUE, } *His friends.*
JERRY CROW, }

BONES, } *Members of the Crow Club.*
CUFF, }

SCENE.—*Mr. Pompey Squib's office, with a table and two chairs; practical door in flat. Pompey Squib seated at table with a newspaper.*

Pomp. I think it's berry hard on dis child, dat nobody seems to believe one word dat comes out in de *Bungtown Roarer* in spite ob all de efforts I makes to improve dere mind by putting in all de most improbable stories dat I can make out ob my own head, and all de most wonderful tales dat I can cram into one sheet ob paper out ob odder people's heads besides. Dar's only one bit ob k'rect information in all dis here

sheet, and dat is de deff ob ole Pete Jones, and I'm blest if ole Pete didn't come himself and punch my head dis morning for telling de folk he was dead. He said it was deformation ob character to say dat any man was dead till I'd been properly orferised by de man himself to publish it. I wonder what'll be next.

Enter Ginger with a newspaper.

Ginger. I'm going to be next.

Pomp. Ah, good-morning, Massa Blue. How d'ye do? (*Offers his hand.*)

Ginger. Pompey Squib, do you think I'd shake dat hand till it was cleaned ob de awful sin dat sticks to it like a 'possum sticks to de bark ob a buttonwood tree?

Pomp. What awful sin does you mean, Massa Blue?

Ginger. Can you ask de question wid dat paper in your hand, Pompey Squib—arn't you ashamed ob yourself?

Pomp. What for?

Ginger. De awful crime ob Hyperbully, Pompey.

Pomp. Hyper—nebber did such a deed in my life! I wasn't dar at all, don't say it was me!

"Thou canst not say I did it—nebber shake
Thy curly locks at me!"

Ginger. Didn't you put dis in de paper: "Extraordinary flight ob crows?"

Pomp. Yes, I did, Massa Blue.

Ginger. Den it's one ob de greatest hyperbullys I eber saw.

Pomp. I 'sure you, Massa Blue, dat ebery sentence in dat paper is based upon de most notorious and improbable facts.

Ginger. What! do you mean to say dat—but stop. I'll read it you:

The other day, de whole ob de country was plunged in de most profound darkness by de passage ob de flight ob crows, which completely hid de sun from sight. By measurement, dis immense flock ob birds was

found to be ober twelve miles long, with an average bredth ob about four miles.

Dar, now, what do you tink ob dat?

Pomp. Think? Why I tink it's a nat'ral fenome-non you don't hear about ebery day.

Ginger. But how did you get at dat measurement, Pompey Squib?

Pomp. Easy enuff, Massa Blue. De man dat sent me de account got up a ladder and measured dem him-self. But I don't want to fall out wid you about de matter, so for your sake I'll take a mile off de thinnest end.

Ginger. Ah, well, dat mile makes all de difference, Pompey, and I'll shake hands wid you now. But dar's somefing else yet, Pompey; you've sent me a bill in for your papers—now I considers dat's berry mean, 'specially to an old friend like me. Hahn't I kept on taking dis paper all dis time, and reading it, and lending it out to my friends, just to keep you going? and now to be asked to pay for it in de bargain. It's berry mean, Pompey Squib, and I'm sorry for you.

Enter Jerry Crow.

Crow. What's mean?

Ginger. What's dat to you?

Crow. I thought you was talkin' to me. Say, Pomp, you isn't heard how I sold old Snowball, yesterday.

Pomp. No, Jerry, how's dat?

Crow. Why, you know'd my hoss, old blind Bob.

Pomp. Yes, I knows him.

Crow. Not now you doesn't, he's dead.

Pomp. What, ole blind Bob?

Crow. Jess de same ole hoss. He died yesserday, and I propped him up against de fence while I fetched a hurdle to cart him away, and who should I meet but ole Snowball, wid his gun in his hand. "Mornin', daddy Snowball," I said, "have you had any luck to-day?" "Yes," he said, "bad luck." "What," I said,

"not a shot?" "Darn de one," says Snowball; "but look here," he says, "isn't dat your ole hoss a-standing 'gainst de rail fence yonder?" I says, "Yes, dat's our Bob." "Well," he says, "I'll gib you a dollar if you'll let me hab a shot at him as he stands dar." "You couldn't hit him from here," I says. "Couldn't I," says out ole Snowball, "here, catch hold ob dis dollar, and I'll show you. I'll bet you anoder dollar I drop him first shot." I says, "done," and old Snowball took his sights and fired. But ole Bob nebber stirred. "Missed him, by Jericho!" says Snowball, "but I'll hab anoder shot; here's anoder dollar." So I laughs at him and takes his dollar, and he has anoder try. He's a bit hard ob hearing, but *I* hears de thud ob de bullet as it bores a hole in poor ole Bob's ribs; so I says to him, "I wonder what de darkies'll say when I tell 'em dat ole Snowball couldn't hit a hoss at thirty yards!" Dis put his dander up, an' you should hab seen him part wid his dollars like a lamb. I had dat nigger shooting at de ole dead hoss nearly half an hour at a dollar a shot, and I got fifty-five dollars for ole Bob's carcase, dat wasn't worth two dollars. At last ole Snowball says, "What in thunder ails the old screw dat he doesn't stir? I'll go and drive him out ob de shade ob dat gum tree, and den I'll hab a better shot." So he walks up to ole Bob, and I walks home; and I've nebber seen ole Snowball since. (*Pompey and Jerry laugh heartily.*)

Ginger. Dat was a scanderlous piece of business; looks berry much like cheating, doesn't it?

Pomp. Can't see it. Dar's no harm in shooting at an old dead hoss, is dar, Jerry?

Crow. Not a bit. I'll stand ole Bob against all de best shots in Virginny at a dollar a shot!—he'll nebber flinch. But I say, Pomp, dar's trouble for you in de wind.

Pomp. How's dat, Jerry?

Crow. My informashun's berry private, and mustn't be told before anoder party.

Ginger. Oh, I'll go into your study, Pompey, and look at de papers a short time. (*Exit Ginger.*)

Pomp. Now, Jerry, what's it all about?

Crow. You're a gwine to catch it!

Pomp. What for?

Crow. You've been a doing somefin' agin de Crow Club.

Pomp. Well, Jerry, I'se only been a pepperin' 'em a bit in de *Bungtown Roarer*; 'twasn't much.

Crow. Well, dey're a gwine to let you hab it berry hot, and I knows dar's two ob 'em on de way now, wid thick sticks!

Pomp. Snakes and knitting needles! Den I'd better be out when dey calls.

Crow. I tink dat would be your best move, Pomp.

Pomp. And I say, Jerry, wouldn't it be smart if I left ole *Ginger Blue* to take my place at de meeting? He won't pay me for de papers he had, so I'll take de pay out in dat way.

Crow. Golly! dat's fine, Pomp! Come along, dey'll both be here directly. Dey've took different roads to stop your getting off widout meeting one ob 'em.

Pomp. Den we'll just step in to Ole Bull's round de corner, and avoid dem both. (*Turns toward the side where Ginger went out, and bows with great dignity.*) Good-by, Massa Blue; perhaps when we meets again you'll hab put dat mile on de flight ob crows again, and paid for your papers. (*Exit Pompey and Crow.*)

Reënter Ginger, with newspaper.

Ginger. Most eberybody can write poor sense, but it takes a man ob education to write good nonsense, and dere's very few can read it when it's writ. Here some poetry. (*Reads.*)

De first bird ob spring
He tried for to sing,
But before he had sounded a note,

He fell from de limb,
And a dead bird was him,
For de music had friz in his throat!

Enter from behind, Bones, with a cudgel.

Dar's a good bit ob sentiment in dat.

Bones. Dar'll be a strong bit ob *scent*, he meant, directly. (*Shakes cudgel.*)

Ginger. Dese poetical fellers write about birds of spring, and robins, and sparrows, and ostriches, jumping about from bough to bough—

Bones. Dere'll be an old jay bird jumping about, shortly.

Ginger. And oders write about dere sweet melodies—

Bones. And you'll go *right about* with sweet melody.

Ginger. Oders prefers to see de little birds stripped of all dere fedders, and fried on a gridiron, or roasted—

Bones. Dar'll be an old coon roasted with a cudgel directly.

Ginger. But dar's only one bird you nebber can pluck, and dat's de eagle—de screaming, roaring, fighting American eagle, dat sits on de telegraff wires, and whips all creation, including Coney Island. Here's something about de Crow Club. (*Reads.*) "Dose low slippery fellows dat call demselves de 'Crow Club,'—

Bones. It's coming for you, my friend!

Ginger. "Ought to be called de 'Low Club,' and any club ob darkey gentlemen dat thinks demselves gentlemen, but don't pay for dere newspapers, ought to be *tattooed* from sassiety."

Bones (*comes forward and collars him*). Ought dey?

Ginger. Halloo, who are you?

Bones. I'm one of the tattooers and I'm gwine to begin my day's work wid you.

Ginger. Wid me?

Bones. Yes, you're de proprietor ob dis paltry old rag, dat you call de *Bungtown Roarer*.

Ginger. No, I ain't.

Bones. Den who is, and whar is he?

Ginger. He's jist gone out; I'll fetch him for you.

Bones. No, you don't, I'm not a gwine to lose sight ob you. Do you see dis rib tickler? (*Shakes stick.*)

Ginger. Yes, I do.

Bones. Dat's for de editor ob dis old waste rag. Whar is he?

Ginger. He'll berry likely be in directly; dat's his study. (*Points to room which he has just left.*) If you'll go in dar, and amuse yourself wid de papers and de pen and ink on his desk, I think he'll come to you.

Bones. Dat's all right. (*Exit into room.*)

Ginger. Dere, he's busy doing something. He's tearing all de papers on de desk into bits, and throwing 'em into de fire. Now he's jabbing all de pens on de desk, and breaking de points. (*Noise within.*) Now he's smashed de inkstand with de ruler, and thrown de scissors and paste pot into de fire; now he's sat down with his back dis way, and looking at de paper. I'll be moving whilst he's not looking dis way.

(*As Ginger goes to the door, he meets Cuff, who is entering with a cudgel.*)

Cuff. Stop dar, I knows you; I'se only just in time for you.

Ginger. What do you want wid me?

Cuff. You'll soon see. (*Turns up his coat wristbands.*)

Ginger. What's de matter?

Cuff. You're de matter, and you're de matter dat has to be operated on, you ole ink-slinger.

Ginger. Do you know who I am?

Cuff. Yes, you're de editor ob de *Bungtown Roarer*.

Ginger. You're under a mistake; de editor's in his study dere (*points off*), sitting wid his back dis way, reading de paper.

Cuff. Oh, dat's him, is it? I see him—now don't you stand in de way.

Ginger. I won't.

(Cuff walks on tiptoe towards the study, with cudgel upraised. Ginger runs out hastily.)

Cuff. Dere he is; I wonder if he 'spects what's coming to him?

Bones (within). Wonder how long I'm to wait here fer dat scoundrel?

Cuff. Oh, he expects me, does he? Who's told him dat?

Bones (within). I's getting tired ob waiting; I'll go directly and smash de feller outside.

Cuff. Golly, he looks a big nigger, as he sits wid his back dis way. I 'gins to feel skeery—wish I hadn't come.

Bones (within). Oh, if he only know'd what's waiting ob him here.

Cuff. Why, he's got a big stick on his knees. I think I'll go whilst de coast am clear. *(Goes to the door and finds that Ginger has fastened it on the outside.)* Why, dat oder nigger's locked de door! What shall I do? If dat ruffian inside comes out he'll murder somebody, de bloodthirsty villain! Eh, golly; I'll go behind him and hit him on de head—de fust blow am best ob de battle, and dis child means to hab de fust blow, and a good un into de bargain.

(Goes quietly into the room with his stick uplifted.)

Bones (within). Dis child waits no longer. What's dat? *(Noise of a struggle within.)*

Reënter Bones and Cuff, fighting with their cudgels, and after some comic fighting business, they fall against door, burst it open, and both disappear, with a noise as if falling down stairs.

CURTAIN.

ROMANCE AT HOME

CHARACTERS

SERAPHINA, *An authoress.*

MR. BROWN, *Her husband.*

HARRY, } *Her sons.*
JOHNNY, }

IRISH GIRL, *A servant.*

SCENE.—*Seraphina seated at table, writing. The various characters enter abruptly, speak, and immediately retire.*

Seraphina. Well, I think I'll finish that story for the editor of the *Dutchman*. Let me see; where did I leave off?—The setting sun was just gilding with his last ray—

Enter Harry.

Harry. Ma, I want some bread and molasses and a cookie.

Ser. Yes, dear—gilding with his last ray the church spire—

Enter Brown.

Brown. Where's my Sunday pants?

Ser. Under the bed, dear—the church spire of Inverness, when a—

Brown. There's nothing under the bed, dear, but your lace cap—

Ser. Perhaps they are in the coal hod, in the closet—when a horseman was seen approaching—

Enter Irish Girl.

Irish Girl. Ma'am, the *pertators* is out; not one for dinner—

Ser. Take some turnips!—approaching, covered with dust, and—

Brown. Wife, the baby has swallowed a button.

Ser. Reverse him, dear! Take him by the heels—and waving in his hand a banner, on which was written—

Johnny (outside). Ma! I've torn my pantaloons!

Ser. —Liberty or death! The inhabitants rush *en masse*—

Enter Brown.

Brown. Wife, will you leave off scribbling?

Ser. Don't be disagreeable, Brown; I'm just getting inspired—to the public square, where De Begnis, who had been secretly—

Irish Girl. Butcher wants to see you, ma'am.

Ser. —secretly informed of the traitors—

Irish Girl. Forget *which* you said, ma'am, sausages or mutton chop.

Ser. —movements, gave orders to fire! Not less than twenty. (*Enter Brown with baby [dummy] head downward.*) My gracious! Brown, you haven't been reversing that child all this time! He's as black as your coat. (*Enter Johnny with crumpled paper. Seraphina snatches it.*) And that boy of yours has torn up the first sheet of my manuscript. (*Two very small children heard crying outside.*) There! It's no use for a married woman to cultivate her intellect. Brown, hand me them twins.

FANNY FERN.

THE DEBATING SOCIETY

CHARACTERS

PRESIDENT, *The chairman.*

MR. SNOOKS,

MR. SQUIRRELS,

MR. GOOSEBERRY,

MR. CLUTTERCLUMP.

} *Participants in the debate.*

SCENE.—*The rooms of the society.*

President. Gentlemen, the question for debate this evening is, whether love is a passion of the heart or of the soul? I want the gentlemen to speak up so I can hear 'em, and to do all their sneezin' and coughin' before they begins, and everyone blow his nose beforehand, so as he shan't stop to do it when he makes his speech; and here is my handkerchief for anyone as hasn't got none. Mr. Cæsar Augustus Washington Snooks will open the debate.

Snooks. Mr. President, we have come together this evening, as I take it, to come to a decision. I was one of the first members in it, and we did it to improve the mind; for, as Mr. Samuel Shakespeare says, "Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious by the son of New York." We expect this night, if we all have our health, to decide on the problemities of love, and tell where it lays and what is its symptoms. And just as the President says, so shall it be, whether it's in the heart, or in the soul, or in the heel. If he says so, it shall be so, and because why—why you see because it shall—

This is a very important subject we are going to decide, and the opinion of this Society will go forth to the world like the signers of the Declaration of Independence. And in after life, when our locks are in the

yellow leaf, we may look back with pride on this evening; and people in the land, now abed, will hold our names dog-cheap. And I go in for love being in the heart, 'cause I was once in love myself, and I swow my heart felt jest like a shot partridge, and I couldn't felt worse if I'd lost a whip-lash, and so I stick to it, love is in the heart, and when I put my foot down, you can't move me more than you can a stun fence, and when my mind's made up, I'm jest like the stately pine, with its green tops waving to and fro in the breezes of heaven.

Pres. Mr. Archibald Squirrels will please to get up next.

Squirrels. Mr. President, I don't purtend to be nothin' very great on a speech, but I can lick that feller's argument jest as dry as a chip, and that just as easy, too, as a dog can lick his ear. He sticks to it that love's in the heart, but that don't make it so, 'cause I knowed a gal named Sal Saspan that stuck to it that love was in the feet, for she said jest as quick as she fell in love her feet begun to swell, and she had to put mustard plasters on 'em to draw it out. So that jest kills his shot partridge all to smash; and here's another thing, when a feller's ugly to his gal and won't take her out a sleigh ridin', she tells him he ain't got no soul. There was a case of that kind 'curred last spring; it was Mr. Pippin's daughter was courted by Jones, the barber's clerk's assistant, for upwards of three weeks, and because he wouldn't put her in a sleigh and take her down to her Aunt Peggy's, on the Four Corners, she up and telled him he had no more soul than would lay on the p'int of a needle. Now, if he can box the compass and cap the needle, I'll gin in; but I see Mr. Gooseberry is wantin' to speak, so I'll sit right down and gin him a chance, and I hope we shall decide this p'int in a way to satisfy all by-gone generations. But I consider, Mr. President, that Mr. Snooks' argument is just about as small as a half cent cut in two.

Pres. Now, gentlemen, you'll be as silent as pos-

sible, and leave off eating peanuts, for Mr. Gooseberry is going to speak.

Gooseberry. Mr. President, when the far-reaching eye of science grasped the specter of power and sat enthroned upon the pyramids of Rome—when the acuteness of the Heculean ages that are past was put to rest by the somber shadows of the printing press—then it was that the age of chivalry submerged itself from the dark expanse, and love was beating in the bosom of the Western world. It is perfectly clear to me, Mr. President, that love, like the bird of Jove when he towers into the cerulean atmosphere and pounces on his prey—that if this bird of Jove could look with his piercing eye into the hearts of men and women, he would see love perched on the apex of the human bosom.

Mr. Squirrels has told you of Pippin's daughter; but, sir, he has got to prove that she was in love with Mr. Jones. I respect Mr. Jones, and have frequently been shaved at the shop of his master. But, sir, it is a problem which futurity must solve, whether a gentleman whose business it is to compound lather, shave his customers, and hang wigs on the outer walls of his master's shop, was capable of inspiring love in the heart of Pippin's daughter.

Sir, I have done; let me be correctly reported; nothing extenuate or set down aught in malice. I am confident what I have said will have a solemn effect upon the mind of the President, and will be like the torrents of a stagnant pool, that shakes the earth to its center. For as that beautiful poet has it in his "Paradise Lost":

"Cupidum abidum in heartum,
Et solum obsquatulandum sunt."

Pres. Mr. Clutterclump will please to speak next.

Clutterclump. Mr. Pr-Pr-President, as I understand it, the qu-qu-question is this evening w-we-whether love is in the so-so-soul or in the heart, and aw-aw-awl I've got to say is, th-th-that we-we-whether love is in th-the

soul or in the h-h-heart, it makes very little odds, for I was in l-l-l-love once myself, and I felt it all over me, from the cr-cr-crown of my foot to-to the soul of my head, and it was a-a-a-as strong as brandy and sw-sw-sweet as lasses, and so I g-g-g-go in b-b-b-both sides of the qu-qu-question.

Pres. Well, now, I believe all the gentlemen have spoke on the two sides of the question, besides Mr. Clutterclump that spoke on both sides. In the first place, Mr. Snooks remarked that now is the winter of our discontent; now that's very true, and when a man tells me what's true once I can believe him ag'in. But then Mr. Squirrels don't agree with him, and I can't think of sid-ing ag'in Mr. Squirrels, 'case he buys all his goods at my shop. Then comes Mr. Gooseberry, and it was wonderful to hear him talk about the eagle, and the pyramids, and the Western world, as was discovered by Christofer Columbus. I've got a geography hum that's got it all in; as for Mr. Clutterclump, he goes in for both sides, and says love is all over the body. Now, I stand here to decide something that's been held in dispute ever since the Christian era, and that was long before the New Era was printed. Now, gentlemen, this question has got to be decided one way or the other, so we'll settle it by chuckin' up a cent. Who's got a red cent?

(All search their pockets; one produces a cent, which the President "flips" and announces.)

Pres. This question is decided in favor of the heart.

(Great manifestations of delight on the part of Mr. Snooks, Mr. Gooseberry, and Mr. Clutterclump.)

ARNOLD.

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S TROUBLES

CHARACTERS

MR. THAXTER, *A photographer.*

MRS. JEMIMA JONES, *An old lady from the country.*

MRS. HOFFNER, *A Dutch woman.*

SCENE.—*A photograph gallery. Mr. Thaxter standing near a camera. Enter Mrs. Jones, with a large bonnet on and an umbrella in her hand.*

Mrs. Jones. How de do, mister? How de do? Is this the place where we can get our picters took?

Mr. Thaxter. Yes, ma'am, we take pictures here. Do you wish to sit for a picture?

Mrs. Jones. Well, I hadn't just made up my mind whether I'd be took while I was sittin' or while I was standin' up. Sarah Ann Jenkins, over to Gooseberry Holler, she got hers a-sittin' down, and Arabella Higgins she got hers a-standin' up. Sarah Ann said as how she'd a heap ruther have the sittin' down picters, and Arabella said she'd ruther have the standin' up picters. Which do you like best, mister?

Mr. Thaxter. Oh, I have no choice. Of course there are differences of opinion in regard to the matter. Some prefer one position, while others prefer another. We are always glad to take the picture in any position our patrons may choose.

Mrs. Jones. Yes, I s'pose. Well, I hain't jist altogether made up my mind whether I'll have a picter took or not. I reckon they come purty high?

Mr. Thaxter. Oh, no; only a dollar for half a dozen. One of the cheapest places in the city.

Mrs. Jones. Yes, I s'pose. Can you take 'em purty good?

Mr. Thaxter. Oh, yes; our pictures are unequaled. And we give half a dozen for a dollar.

Mrs. Jones. Half a dozen—that's six, isn't it?

Mr. Thaxter. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Jones. I reckon you'd give me seven for a dollar?

Mr. Thaxter. No, ma'am. Our price is six for a dollar. We cannot deviate.

Mrs. Jones. Deviate! What's that ag'in?

Mr. Thaxter. I mean by that that we cannot give more to one person than to another.

Mrs. Jones. Well, I think I'll have to get seven. There's my niece, Susannah Symington, what lives down on the big fork of Yaller Creek—I must give her one. Then there's Sally Ann Stonington, that lives out to Tuckertown—she has asked me for a fulty-graft about half a dozen times, and I allers said I'd give her one, but somehow I never get straightened up so's I could come to the city. But I'm here now, and I reckon it had better be attended to. Then there's my brother-in-law, what lives in the same town where I live—his folks have been askin' and askin' for my picter, and I allers kalkilated that they ought to have one. And Sam Skoover's folks, over to Turtle Holler—they think they have as good a right to have a fulty-graft of me as the rest of the relations, and I promised them one. But, raily, so many people got to askin' me for my picter that I jest had to stop promisin' to give 'em. And there was Betsey Puddleford—she's one of the Puddlefords out by Sugar Creek—she said as how she'd be delighted to have a picter. And Jane Ann Pendergrass—

Mr. Thaxter. Well, then, you think you'll sit for a negative?

Mrs. Jones. No, it wasn't a negative I was wantin' to get. It was a fultygraft, about so big this way (*showing with her hands*), and about so big that way. They put them in albumnums, you know, and let them lay on the table in the parlor or the sittin'-room.

Mr. Thaxter. Then you wish to sit for a picture?

Mrs. Jones. Well, I don't know about that. Hain't

quite made up my mind on that p'int. Sometimes I think I'll be tuck standing up, and then ag'in I think mebbe I'd better be took sittin' down. I kinder think, mebbe, a woman looks more impressive when she's sittin' down. Don't you think so, mister?

Mr. Thaxter. Yes, I believe you are correct.

Mrs. Jones. Now, there was Cornelia Van Deusen, she got her picter took sittin' down, and I didn't like the looks of it at all. Sam Skiles said as how if she had stood up, and had held up her head, she'd a-looked kind of grand and imposing like.

Mr. Thaxter. Then you think you'll take half a dozen pictures?

Mrs. Jones. No, I want seven. It'll take seven to go 'round. You said you'd give me seven for a dollar—didn't you?

Mr. Thaxter. No, I didn't say it. But seeing that it is you, and you have come so far, I will put it at that figure—seven for one dollar.

Mrs. Jones. All right, mister. Go ahead and take the fultygraft.

Mr. Thaxter. Do you want to remove your bonnet?

Mrs. Jones. Well, now, I don't know about that. What do you think I ought to do, mister?

Mr. Thaxter. I believe you would make a better picture with your bonnet off.

Mrs. Jones. Well, yes, I guess I would. (*Unties her bonnet and takes it off.*) I want you to take purty good care of this bunnit while I'm gettin' my fultygraft tuck. (*Hands her bonnet to Mr. Thaxter.*) I jest got it trimmed on purpose to come to town. Sarah Jane Wimple done it up fur me. How do you like the looks of it? Purty well trimmed, ain't it?

Mr. Thaxter. Yes, it is a very neat bonnet.

Mrs. Jones. Melinda Smith, she kinder laughed at it, but I just up and told Melinda that it was good enough fur anybody, and a great deal better than she could wear if her father would pay his debts. Old

Hezekiah Smith—that's Melinda's father—he isn't a very good hand at payin' his debts.

Enter Mrs. Hoffner.

Mrs. Hoffner. I wants to git my bicter took. This is de blace, ain'd it?

Mr. Thaxter. Yes, this is the place. What kind of a picture do you want?

Mrs. Hoffner. I wants her sittin' town on a shair, or someding dot vay.

Mr. Thaxter. Very well; I will take it that way.

Mrs. Jones. But you're goin' to take mine first, ain't you?

Mrs. Hoffner. No, he von't. I am in a pig hurry und I must haf mine took righd off. Vill you do dot?

Mr. Thaxter. Not unless this lady is satisfied to wait. We must wait on customers as they come. In other words, "First come, first served."

Mrs. Hoffner (to Mrs. Jones). Vell, vot do you say apout it? Would you pe acreed to vait?

Mrs. Jones. No, I won't wait a minute for anybody. I kalkilate my time is about as precious as any other woman's.

Mrs. Hoffner. Vell, you are von pig fool voman. I is in von pig hurry, und I vant to git started mit de gars. If de gars gits started first, den I von't git home ondil to-morrow mornin'. Von't you vait mit your bicture ondil I git mine dook?

Mrs. Jones. No, I'll not wait. I was here first, and I'm not going to wait on anybody. I'm in a hurry, too. Becky Ann Tucker she cum to town along with me, and she'll be a-waitin' down at Jackson's grocery.

Mr. Thaxter. Be seated, then, and I will soon take your picture. (*Places chair, and brings the head-rest forward.*)

Mrs. Jones. What's that fork fur? I'm afeard you're going to play some kind of a trick on me.

Mr. Thaxter. Oh, no; no trick at all. I will place

this at your back so you cannot move your head. To get a good picture, your head must be kept still.

Mrs. Hoffner. Vell, vot vill I do apout it? Vill I vait, or vill I go?

Mrs. Jones. Well, you can do just as you have a mind to. I don't care one way nor t'other.

Mrs. Hoffner. Shoost sdop your dalk. I vasn't sbeakin' to you.

Mr. Thaxter. I can be ready for you in a short time. (*Places cloth over his head, and looks through the camera.*)

Mrs. Jones (springing up). Mister, are you goin' to shoot?

Mrs. Hoffner (laughs very loud). Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho, he, he, he, he! Dot is so goot! Funniest ting I efer saw.

Mrs. Jones. You old Dutch woman, you had better stop your laughin' at me.

Mrs. Hoffner (continues to laugh). Oh, ho, ho, ho, ho! But dot vas funny. She thought she vas goin' to pe fired at mit a gun! Oh, ho, ho, ho!

Mr. Thaxter. You will have to sit again.

Mrs. Jones. But are you rail sure that thing won't go off?

Mr. Thaxter. Yes, it is perfectly safe. It is the instrument for taking pictures; it will not shoot.

Mrs. Jones. Well, I'll sit down and try it over. (*Seats herself, and Mr. T. adjusts her head in the head-rest.*) Now you can go ahead.

Mr. Thaxter (covers his head, and looks through the camera). Keep perfectly still.

Mrs. Hoffner (very loud). Shoot! fire! bang! (*Mrs. Jones springs up. Mrs. Hoffner laughs very loud.*) Shot again! Shot again! De old voman's shot again!

Mr. Thaxter. There! You've done it now.

Mrs. Jones. It was that varmint of a Dutch woman. I'll settle her business. (*Raises her hand, and rushes at Mrs. Hoffner.*)

Mr. Thaxter (going between them). No, there must be no fighting here.

Mrs. Hoffner (laughing very loud). Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha! She is de scariest oldt voman I efer did see. She thought she vas killed mit dot cannon. (*Laughs.*) Ho, ho, ho!

Mr. Thaxter. You must not meddle with persons when they are sitting for pictures. And if you cannot refrain from it, I would thank you to leave the gallery.

Mrs. Hoffner (laughs). Ho, ho, ho! I shoost wanted to see if I could make her shump.

Mr. Thaxter (to Mrs. Jones). Are you ready to sit again?

Mrs. Jones. No, I'll not sit any more. I'll get the fultygrafts to-morrow. Let the old Dutch woman get her fultygraft now so's she can git on the train and git out of the way.

Mr. Thaxter. That will do. (*To Mrs. Hoffner.*) We will take your picture now.

Mrs. Hoffner. Dot vill be fery vell. I can get de bicters und get off along mit de train. (*Seats herself in the chair.*)

Mr. Thaxter (placing her head in the head-rest). Now don't move. You can wink as much as you want to, but don't move your head.

Mrs. Hoffner. No, I von't mofe. I understand de pizness. I haf had my bicter dook afore many a dimes. But I tinks dat oldt vomans nefer had her bicter took.

Mr. Thaxter (looking through the camera). Now keep still, and don't laugh any more. I am ready.

Mrs. Hoffner. I'm reatty, too. Go ahead.

Mrs. Jones. And I'll go ahead, too. (*She springs upon Mrs. Hoffner, and upsets her chair.*) How do you like that, you old Dutch woman?

Mrs. Hoffner (struggling to get up). Vot's dot you say? Now, den, I'll make you vish you hadn't come. (*Mr. Thaxter endeavors to separate them.*)

Mrs. Jones. Can't you ho, ho, and laugh some more, you old Hottentot? (*They struggle and scream.*)

CURTAIN.

McBRIDE.

O'HOO LAHAN'S MISTAKE

CHARACTERS

JUDGE YOUNG, *A county judge.*

PAT, } *Two Irishmen.*
TED, }

BIDDY, *Pat's wife.*

SCENE.—*Judge Young's court room, the Judge seated upon a little raised platform with a railing or desk in front.*

Enter Pat and Ted, breathless, both speaking at once.

Ted. }
Pat. } *Mr. Judge, Mr. Judge! Oh, yer honor—*

Judge—Judge.

Judge. One at a time, if you please.

Pat. Judge—yer—honer—will I sphake thin?

Ted. Silence! I am here! Let me talk! Phwat do you know about law?

Judge. Keep still yourself, sir. Let him say what he wants.

Pat. Well, I want me naime aff the paiper. That's phwat I want.

Judge. Off what paper?

Pat. Well, aff the paiper; ye ought to know what paiper. Sure, ye married me, they say.

Judge. To whom?

Pat. Some female, sir; and I don't want her, sir. It don't go! and I want me naime aff the paiper.

Ted. Silence! (*Bringing his huge fist down upon the little pulpit, just under the Judge's nose, with a tremendous thwack.*) Silence! I am here. Phwat do you know about law? Sure, yer honor, it was Tim McCloskey's wife that he married—his widdy, I mane. You married thim, yer honor.

Pat. And I was dhrunk at the time, sir. Yes, sir; an' I was not a free aigent; an' I don't know a thing about it, sir—devil rowast me. I want me name aff the paper—I repudiate, sir.

Ted. Silence! Let me spake. Phwat do you know about law? (*Bringing his fist down upon the judge's desk.*)

Pat. But I was dhrunk; I was not at the time a free aigent.

Ted. Silence! I am here to spake. It does not depind on that at all. It depinds—and there is the whole pint, both in law and equity—it depinds whether was the woman a sole trader or not at the time this marriage was solemnated. That is the pint, both in law and equity!

Pat. But I was dhrunk at the time. Divil rowast me if I knowed I was gittin' married. I was not a free aigent. I want the Judge to taik me naime aff the paiper. It don't go.

Judge. Well, but drunk or sober, you are married to the woman fast enough, and if you want a divorce, you must go to another court.

Pat. Divil burn me if I go to another court. You married me, and ye can unmarry me. Taik me naime aff the paiper!

Ted. Silence! (*Bringing his fist down in close proximity to the Judge's nose.*) Phwat do you know about law? I admit, Judge, that he must go to a higher court; that is (*down comes the fist*), if the woman can prove (*whack*) that she was at the time the marriage was solemnated (*whack*) a regularly ordained sole thrader (*whack*). On this pint it depinds, both in law and equity.

Judge. I have had enough of this! I cannot divorce you. You are married, and married you must remain, for all I can do.

Pat. Ye won't taik me naime aff the paiper, thin?

Judge. It would not mend the matter.

Pat. Ye won't taik it aff?

Judge. No; I won't. (*Very loud.*)

Ted. Silence! (*Bringing down his fist.*) It depends whether, at the time, the woman was a regular sole—

Judge. Get out of here. I've had about enough of this! (*Rising.*)

Pat. Ye won't taik it aff? Very well, thin, I'll go hoam and devorce myself. Divil roawst me, I'll fire the thatch! I will— (*Glances toward the front door, and in a stooping posture goes out the back door like a shot. Ted also glances toward the door, and follows.*)

Enter Biddy, a large Irish woman, with fire in her eyes. She advances toward the Judge.

Biddy. Did I, or did I not, see Patrick O'Hoolahan sneak out of your back door?

Judge. I believe O'Hoolahan is the name of one of the gentlemen who just went out.

Biddy. You be-e-lave! You know it was Patrick O'Hoolahan! Now what is all this connivin' in here about? Am I a widdy again? Did ye taik his naime aff the paiper? Did ye taik it aff?

Judge. N-no.

Biddy. Ye didn't? Don't ye decave me!

Judge. No; I give you my word of honor I didn't, couldn't—I had no right.

Biddy. It's well for ye, ye didn't. I'll tache him to be rinnin' about connivin' to lave me a lone widdy ag'in, whin I'm makin' a jintleman of him. (*Marches to door, turns, shakes fist, and says.*) Now, do ye mind that ye lave his naime on the paiper! I want no meddlin' wid a man wanst I git him. No more connivin'!

A BUDGET OF BLUNDERS

CHARACTERS

ARCHY ASPEN, } *Amateur sportsmen.*
FRANK TREMOR, }
FERRET, *A detective.*

SCENE.—*Waiting room at a Long Island railway station.*

Enter Archy hurriedly, R.

Archy. The next train for New York starts in half an hour. How nervous I am, to be sure—not a surprising thing, when one has been the means of causing the death of a fellow creature. Oh, my poor nerves. Why, oh, why, did Jones insist upon me trying my hand at shooting woodcock! When away from the majority of the company, I tried my hand—but alas, I did not shoot a bird. Poor Tremor! to think that you, my best friend, should have been the one to receive the contents of the barrel. Immediately upon hearing his cry of pain—of mortal agony—the vision of a court, judge, jury, gallows and hangman, came before my eyes. Acting upon impulse, I turned and fled; hearing, as I did so, a gun fired, which caused me to give a terrified shriek. It was quite an accident my shooting Frank Tremor, and perhaps they would acquit me, but then—(*steps*)—ah, someone comes. If I am seen, my face will be my own accuser. Where can I hide! Ah, in here! (*Exit, L.*)

Enter Ferret, R.

Ferret. No one about at present. The train for New York starts in twenty minutes. If they endeavor

to leave here by that train, I shall nab them nicely. Tom Ferret is not the detective to be easily balked of his prey. I came down here from main office in search of a couple of criminals, wanted on a charge of murder. According to information received, they are in the neighborhood. It may have been a hoax to put us on the wrong scent, and it may be correct information. If they are here, I'll run 'em down, or my name ain't Tom Ferret. I'll go and make a few inquiries at those cottages at the end of yonder lane. (*Exit, L.*)

Enter Archy cautiously, L.

Archy. I am done for! I couldn't hear all he said, but I heard enough to convince me that he is after me. I heard him mention the word—murder—that was quite enough. I didn't try to hear more. Perhaps I had better give myself up to this gentleman, and save him further trouble. How quickly they have put the detectives on the scent. I wonder if they would believe in my innocence? Poor Tremor! He knows his old friend Archy Aspen did not intend to kill him. It was a bad day's work for both of us when we accepted the invitation of Jones to come down for a few days' shooting. A few minutes' shooting has proved quite enough for me—and for Tremor too. Ah, I hear footsteps—the detective again, perhaps. Shall I give myself up, or try to escape? I'll back to my hiding place, and think about it; but I won't listen at all this time, for I don't like to hear anything unpleasant about myself. (*Exit, L.*)

Enter Frank Tremor, terrified, R.

Tremor. Dear me! I am quite out of breath. I thought I should have missed the train, now I find it doesn't leave for another quarter of an hour. I must try to get into it unobserved, get to the city, pack up a few things, and then fly the country. Who would ever have thought that I, Frank Tremor, would ever have been guilty of shooting a friend. Poor Archy!

He would have been alive and well at this moment, if Jones had not put that horrid gun into my hands telling me to take good aim. My friend Aspen and myself, not being used to firearms, and wishing to practice alone, got apart from the rest of the party, before we attempted to shoot anything. It seemed to me that we both fired together—an instant after I heard a cry of pain from Archy, then all was quiet. I gave a cry of terror myself, when I realized that I had shot my friend, instead of bringing down a bird. I wonder if I shall swing for it. I cannot prove that it was an accident. Dear me, how I tremble! I think it will be best to fly the country. Ah, Archy, when we accepted Jones's invitation to come here for a short holiday, I little thought I should be the means of killing my friend. (*Steps.*) Ah, who comes? Keep still, my heart.

Enter Ferret, R.

Ferret (aside). Ah, who's this?

Trem. (aside). I hope my looks won't betray me.

Ferret (aside). I'll interrogate him. (*Aloud, taking newspaper from pocket and seating himself.*) Going to the city, sir?

Trem. Yes—er—that is, perhaps,—I should say—no!

Ferret (aside). He seems confused. (*Aloud.*) Have you heard of the horrible murder, sir?

Trem. Mur—mur—murder? (*Aside.*) Fancy them getting it into the papers so soon.

Ferret. Yes, sir; murder. According to this account the murderers have got away.

Trem. Indeed—what a good job—I mean what a—a—what a pity.

Ferret (aside). He does not seem to relish the subject. Surely I haven't caught one of my men so easily. I'll just put a straight question to him, and watch his face.

Trem. (aside). I'm as good as hung—I know I

am. I can't even answer a question without a quiver in the voice, and a shaking at the knees.

Ferret. I say, Mister.

Trem. Sir!

Ferret (*looking him straight in the face*). I suppose you won't mind giving me a civil answer, to a civil question?

Trem. Oh, no—n—n—not at t—t—t—all. (*Aside.*) I wish he wouldn't look at me like that.

Ferret. Then—do you know anything of this murder?

Trem. Me? Oh, no, sir; it wasn't me. What a question to ask a stranger.

Ferret. Well, you see, it's just the sort of question we should ask a stranger, for we could hardly put such a question to a friend, could we?

Trem. Well really, I don't see why you couldn't just as well go and ask a friend that question, as staying here, asking me.

Ferret (*aside*). It strikes me very forcibly this is one of them.

Trem. (*aside*). I'll endeavor to change the subject, then perhaps I shall appear more at my ease. (*Aloud.*) We are having some remarkably fine weather, sir?

Ferret. Yes, we are indeed. *Fine weather for shooting!*

Trem. (*aside*). Ah! then he knows me. I wonder who he is. May I have the honor of knowing who you are, sir?

Ferret. Well, I have too many names to mention at once, so perhaps I had better tell you my profession. It may satisfy your curiosity, as much as knowing my name would. I am one of those gentlemen known as—detectives.

Trem. (*collapsing*). I thought so.

Ferret (*aside*). This is one of them, sure enough. I'll go and place officers round the place, so that he can't escape, keep a good watch, then perhaps I shall find the whereabouts of the other gentleman. If I

arrest him now the other may get away; while if I leave him here, his accomplice may join him, not knowing a detective has been conversing with his pal. (*Aloud, going.*) We shall meet again.

Trem. Shall we?

Ferret. Yes; I shall return here shortly.

Trem. Not if inconvenient for you to do so, I beg.

Ferret. I never study my own convenience when engaged in looking after someone in whom I have taken an interest. You understand? (*Exit, R.*)

Trem. Yes; I think I understand; but then, I have committed no crime. It was an accident; but can I prove it to have been an accident? Really, I think I had better endeavor to escape at once. There's a little passage here on the left, I wonder where it leads. I'll see. (*Exit, L.*)

Enter Archy, cautiously, R.

Archy. No one here—I heard voices a few moments ago. I heard murder mentioned. I knew they were speaking of me, so I put my fingers in my ears, not wishing to hear the relation of the terrible deed. I have determined to give myself up—I may be able to prove it was an accident—whether or no, I cannot go about with a murder on my conscience.

Enter Ferret, L.

Ferret. I have soon returned, you see. Why, you are not the man I left here a moment ago.

Archy. Am I not?

Ferret. You are not the man I was about to arrest on a criminal charge.

Archy. Ah, then you are the detective. I am afraid I am the man.

Ferret (aside). Strange! very strange. (*Aloud.*) Oh, indeed; do you know anything of that recent murder, then?

Archy. Well, I—er—you see—I certainly—but then, it was purely an accident.

Ferret. What was purely an accident?

Archy. Why the—you know, do you not?

Ferret. Not so well as you do, I reckon.

Archy. You may arrest me, Mr. Detective, I'll make a confession later on.

Ferret (aside). This may be a *ruse* to enable the other fellow to escape. I'll go and tell the officers to be extra vigilant. (*Aloud.*) Whoever you are, sir, it will be of no use you trying to get from here. The place is surrounded by officers. I thought you might like to know that.

Archy. Oh, thank you, I am greatly obliged. (*Exit Ferret, L.*) Escape? I haven't the nerve for attempting such a daring thing. Ah, Tremor, Tremor! Poor, Tremor!

-Enter Tremor, L.

Trem. Who calls Tremor—ah, Archy, is that really you?

Archy. What, Tremor—Frank Tremor—my best friend, did I not kill you after all?

Trem. Kill me? no, indeed. I thought I had killed you.

Archy. I assure you, Frank, you did no such thing. But what brought you here?

Trem. I was fleeing from justice. And you?

Archy. Oh, I was endeavoring to escape.

Trem. But when I fired, surely I heard a cry of mortal agony escaping from your lips?

Archy. No, you did not. That was the cry I gave, upon imagining I heard *your* cry of pain, which followed the firing of my gun. But tell me— (*Steps.*)

Trem. Hush, someone approaches.

Archy. Then follow me; in yonder room we can talk without interruption. The door has a bolt inside. Follow, softly, Tremor, softly. (*Exeunt both on tip-toe, R.*)

Enter Ferret, L., with telegram.

Ferret. Gone again—they cannot have escaped. No matter if they have, so far as I am at present concerned, for I have just received this telegram from Central office, saying that the persons I came after have been arrested in quite an opposite direction to that they were supposed to have taken; so the gentlemen I met here are not the criminals after all. Then, who can they be? They seemed terribly frightened, there is some mystery.

Enter Tremor and Archy.

Archy. Ah, Mr. Detective! By-the-bye, I shall not make the confession I promised, for I find I did not kill this gentleman after all. You can see he is not dead, can you not?

Ferret. Yes; I can see that.

Trem. And, Mr. Detective, you will not have the satisfaction of arresting me, either; for, as you see, my friend here is alive and well.

Ferret. Gentlemen, I have no desire, at present, to arrest either of you; for I have just received intelligence that the men I mistook you gentlemen for have been arrested elsewhere. But I fail to understand your remarks.

Archy. Well, you must know—I thought I had shot my friend here, and he thought he had rendered me the same service.

Ferret. Oh. (*Aside.*) Nice lot, these. (*Aloud.*) I am still rather at a loss, gentlemen.

Trem. If you care to know more, dine with us to-day, and we will explain everything.

Ferret. I have no objection, sir, either to receiving the information or the dinner.

Archy. But you must keep secret anything we may tell you. (*Aside to Tremor.*) Mustn't let Jones or his friends know of this.

Trem. (*aside to Archy.*) Certainly not; we'll buy

some woodcock in the city, take them home, and—well—we shot them of course.

Ferret. Never fear, gentlemen, I can keep a secret.

Trem. That's all right, old fellow, and at dinner we'll have a jolly good time laughing over our little "BUDGET OF BLUNDERS."

CURTAIN.

VISITORS FROM THE CITY

CHARACTERS

MRS. RACHEL TAYLOR, *An old lady.*

MRS. MATILDA TAYLOR, *Her daughter-in-law.*

MRS. ROSALIND MARKLEY, *Mrs. Rachel Taylor's niece from the city.*

RUFUS MARKLEY, } *Mrs. Markley's sons.*
HARRY MARKLEY, }

MR. JOHN TAYLOR, *A farmer.*

SCENE.—*A room. Mrs. Rachel Taylor seated with spectacles on, knitting. Mrs. Matilda Taylor engaged in housework.*

Mrs. Taylor (looking from the window). There's a woman and two boys comin' right up to the house. I guess they've jest come from the depot. I wonder who they are. They've got purty good clothes on and look as if they might be high-faluters. There they be right at the door. (*Knock at door, R.*)

Matilda. I suppose we'll soon see who they are. (*Goes to door and opens it.*)

Mrs. Markley (outside). This is where Mr. John Taylor lives, I believe?

Matilda. Yes, ma'am. Come in.

Enter Mrs. Markley, Rufus and Harry.

Mrs. Markley. I suppose you are John Taylor's wife? (*Setting down some packages.*)

Matilda. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. Markley. But you don't know me? Well, I'm Mrs. Markley, from the city. And this is Aunt Rachel. (*Advancing and taking Mrs. Taylor's hand.*) You know me, don't you, Aunt Rachel?

Mrs. Taylor. Yes, I kinder thought it was you.

Mrs. Markley. You remember, Aunt Rachel, you were in the city some time ago and made us a visit.

Mrs. Taylor. Yes, I remember it very well. It was five years ago and I stayed one day.

Mrs. Markley. And these are my two boys. Rufus, you and Harry come up and shake hands with Aunt Rachel.

Rufus (aside). Isn't she a funny lookin' old coon? (*Harry advances and gives his hand to Mrs. Taylor.*)

Mrs. Taylor. Why, you've growed consid'able.

Mrs. Markley (bringing Rufus forward). And this is Rufus. (*Rufus shakes hands with Mrs. Taylor.*)

Mrs. Taylor. You've been growin' too. Are you a purty good boy?

Rufus. Yes, sir—ee, I'm a bully boy.

Mrs. Taylor. Well, I can't say much for your way of talkin'.

Mrs. Markley. Oh, the boys in the city all talk that way. They don't mean any harm; it's a way they have.

Mrs. Taylor. Well, I'd take it out of 'em.

Rufus (aside). Oh, she's an old greenhorn. If she smokes I'll bet I'll have gunpowder in her pipe before to-morrow night.

Matilda. Now, Mrs. Markley, let me have your bonnet.

Mrs. Markley (removing her bonnet). Yes, and it will be a relief to get it off. I always feel more comfortable with my bonnet off. My trunk is down at the depot. I suppose John will go down for it. By the way, where is John?

Matilda. Oh, he's in the harvest field.

Mrs. Markley (seating herself). Oh, yes, I suppose it is harvest time with the farmers.

Mrs. Taylor. Yes, and there's a powerful sight of work to do. Everybody's busy both in the house and out of it. And Matilda's got no help.

Mrs. Markley. And such a delightful time to be in the country! The air is delicious, the grass is so green, and the fields look so inviting.

Rufus. And I s'pose the cows are givin' a good deal of milk.

Mrs. Markley (laughing). That's just like Rufus; he's always thinking about milk. And milk is delicious in this warm weather. I know you have good milk, too, for John always had the reputation of keeping the best of cows and of being a first class farmer.

Harry. I don't want fore milk while I'm stayin' here—I want *skippin's*.

Mrs. Taylor. And what does the boy mean by skip-pin's?

Mrs. Markley (laughing). He means strippings. He has heard me say that fore milk is the first part of the milking and that is not as good as the *strippings*. He's got the wrong word. Poor boy! he hasn't been much in the country and doesn't know the right name of a good many things.

Rufus (to Harry). Harry, let's go out and have some fun. I'm in the country now and I don't care what I do. I'll bet I'll cut up high.

Harry. So'll I. And I'll bet I'll be ridin' on a cow's back afore half an hour.

Mrs. Markley. That's right, boys; run out and play. I want you to enjoy yourselves while you are here.

Rufus. I'll bet I'll do that.

Harry. I'll bet I will too. (*Exit Rufus and Harry, R.*)

Matilda. I will have to ask you to excuse me now, Mrs. Markley. I must go out and see to getting the dinner.

Mrs. Markley. Oh, yes, certainly. But I don't want you to go to too much trouble on our account. I always drink tea, and then if you would give us a small beefsteak and some of your good bread—I know you have good bread—and some good butter—we have such poor butter in the city—and some boiled eggs and some jelly and jam and pie and some fresh raspberries just picked off the bushes—that will be sufficient. Oh, yes, I had almost forgotten about the milk. Give the boys plenty of milk—they're very fond of it—and I suppose they ought to have the strippings. (*Smiling.*) You know that was what Harry wanted.

Matilda. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit Matilda, L.*)

Mrs. Taylor (aside). I wonder if that woman's a fool, or if she thinks she's orderin' up dinner at a hotel. Matilda wasn't thinkin' so much about gettin' up dinner for them as for the harvest hands. (*To Mrs. Markley.*) How'd you like to have some salty pork for dinner, and some beans and sich?

Mrs. Markley. Oh, I detest pork, particularly salt pork. It's enough to destroy the health of anybody.

Mrs. Taylor. Well, I calkilate that's all you'll get to-day for dinner. But I reckon John'll buy some beef to-morrow mornin' seein' as how you are here.

Mrs. Markley. Well, I'm sure I couldn't stay long if I didn't get something better than salt pork.

Mrs. Taylor (aside). The impudence of some people is onparalleled. As if anybody cared how soon she went away. I don't want to be impolite, but I can skurcely keep from breakin' out and givin' her a piece of my mind. (*To Mrs. Markley.*) I reckon you live purty grand in the city?

Mrs. Markley. Oh, yes; we live on Spring avenue, and, you know, anybody that lives there is considered first class.

Mrs. Taylor. Wall, no, I didn't know that.

Mrs. Markley. Oh, yes; and we keep a carriage and a span of horses, and we drive out every day.

Mrs. Taylor. You don't say! I reckon Tom's got a heap of money?

Mrs. Markley. Tom? Do you mean Mr. Markley?

Mrs. Taylor. Yes, I mean Tom Markley.

Mrs. Markley. He is always called Mr. Markley in the city.

Mrs. Taylor. I don't care what he's called in the city—he's called Tom in the country, and Tom's good enough for him.

Mrs. Markley. Yes, Mr. Markley is quite wealthy.

Mrs. Taylor. Well, if he's quite wealthy it's a wonder he doesn't send his family off to Saratoga or some other highfalutin place in the summer instead of sendin' them here to sponge off hard workin' people in the middle of harvest. And they're so sassy about it, too. Want fresh beef and fresh picked raspberries and sich.

Mrs. Markley (rising). Well, Mrs. Taylor, you old skinflint, I can go. I wouldn't stay in such a miserable old tumble down house anyhow. But didn't you come and sponge off us?

Mrs. Taylor. Yes, I went calkilatin' to stay a week, but you might as well have pushed me out of the house as to have acted the way you did. I stayed one day, and I sent the money to pay for my boardin' and lodgin' as soon as I got home. Mind anything about that—hey? I'm gittin' purty old but I've got some spunk yet.

Enter John Taylor dragging in Rufus and Harry.

John (in a passion). Here, who do these boys belong to? Take 'em out o' this purty quick or I'll cowhide them within an inch of their lives. They've been chasin' the cows, and they've stuck one of 'em with a knife and I s'pose it'll die. Rosalind Markley, you're a cousin of mine, but don't you ever set foot on my farm again.

Rufus. Ma, he's an old crank.

Harry. We was just wantin' to get some milk and Rufus stuck his knife into the cow, 'cause, he said, that was the way to get the milk out. He said it would just run out if he cut a hole in the cow.

Mrs. Taylor. Lawful sakes! what idiots.

Mrs. Markley. John Taylor, I'll never enter your door again.

John. No, don't! By hokey, if you do I'll bust the whole family into shoe pegs. Get out and stay out. Last time I was at the door of your house your gal said you wasn't at home, and I saw you peepin' through an upstairs window not two minutes before. I was takin' you a present, too, but I calkilate you thought I looked countryfied and you was afeared I would want a meal's victuals. It's kinder queer you'd come here when you're ashamed of me and ashamed of my mother in the city. (*Speaking very loud.*) Git out, you sarpints.

Rufus. Isn't he a snorter?

Enter Matilda from the kitchen.

Matilda. John, John; what is the matter?

John. Oh! the varmints! What do you think they've done? They've been chasin' the cows all over the pastur' lot here by the house, and one of 'em actilly cut a hole in one of the cows and now, like as not, I'll lose the cow.

Rufus. Well, I wanted some milk and I s'posed that was the way to get it.

John. Git out! git out! Madam, take these brats and travel. Don't let 'em ever come within a mile of me, or I'll have 'em sent to the State's prison.

Mrs. Markley. Come Rufus! come Henry! Let us get away. Oh, such a man! I'm ashamed of him.

Rufus (as he goes out). Hi! old Hottentot, I wish your cow would die.

Harry (as he goes out). Old Boozer, you act like as if you was drunk.

Mrs. Markley (as she goes out). I'll never set foot in this house again.

John. Git out! Git out, you varmints!

CURTAIN.

McBRIDE.

THAT FIRE AT NOLAN'S

CHARACTERS

MRS. NOLAN, *Woman of the house.*

MR. COOGAN, *A caller.*

SCENE.—*A room in disorder.*

Mrs. Nolan. Stip in, Mr. Coogan. Good-marnin' to yer. I suppose it's askin' afther Tirry ye are, an' the foire. Jist walk this way an' contimplat the destruction. The *débree* ain't so much as removed from the flure.

Mr. Coogan. Howly saints! Phat an ixpensive catastrophe, Mrs. Nolan! It's a tirrible dimonstration yez must have had.

Mrs. N. Ah, that it wuz. (*Sinking into a damp and mutilated rocking-chair.*) Ter think of that beautiful Axminister carpet, an' those imported Daggystan roogs, an' our new Frinch mantel clock that had the gooldfish globe over it—all soppin' wet, an' shmashed to shmithereens. It 'ud be a tremingious calamity for anybody.

Mr. C. Tremingious! that it wud. An' how did the occurince evintuate, Mrs. Nolan?

Mrs. N. It wuz all along av the new domestic an' those divilish greeners. (*In a somewhat agitated manner, shaking her head sadly.*) Lasht wake, Katy, our ould gurrel that had bin wid us fer noine years, married a longshoreman, an' so I ingaged a domestic be

the name af Mary Ann Reilly. She had lost two fingers aff av her lift hand, an' wuz rid-hidded an' pock-marked, but she wuz will ricommended, an' so I tuk her at oncet. Tirry didn't loike the looks af her, at all, at all. Bridget, sez he, her eyes are not shtraight, sez he. I don't like google-eyed papple in the house, sez he. Look out, or she'll be afther lookin' at ye or at Tummy, an' bewitchin' ye wid her ayvil eye, sez he. But wud ye belave me, Mr. Coogan, she only looked crucked whin she wuz narvous or excoited, and *ginerally* her eyes wuz as shtraight as yer own in yer hid. She hadn't bin in the house over two days, d'ye moind, whin I dropped the flat-oiron on me fut, scalded me hand, an' broke two chiney dishes in wan mornin', and that same day Tummy got inter the kitchen an' eat up three pounds of raishons, an' wuz shriekin' wid epleptic conwulsions all noight; so I began ter put some faith in her bewitchment mesilf.

Mr. C. Roight for ye (*nodding approvingly at Mrs. Nolan*). That wuz bad loock enough, so it was!

Mrs. N. Will, that wuz only the beginnin'. The nixt thing wuz yisterday mornin' whin Tirry cum home wid a bashkit full o' little, round, green bottles. Phat's thim? sez I. Is it Christmas-tree toys, or is it patent midicine? Nayther, sez Tirry; it's a family foire departmint, sez he. Since we have no tilegraft in the house, sez he, an' insoorance is so expinsible, I've bin afther buyin' some han' grenades ter put out foires wid. Is it limonade is in 'em, did yer say? sez I. No, sez he. They're greenades, Bridget. The bottles is green, an' they aid ye ter put out a foire, sez he. So Tirry hung up wan dozen bottles in the parlor near the dure (*where that woire rack is, Mr. Coogan*), an' instroocted Mary Ann how to ixtinguish foires wid thim, by trowin' thim at the flames.

Mr. C. Is it baseball that it is?

Mrs. N. No, loike stonin' goats, more. Lasht avenin' the lamp wuz lit on the table, Tummy wuz playin' by the winder, an' me husband wuz takin' his

convenience in his arrum-chair, wid his back to the dure. I wuz sittin' near the table a-readin' the mornin' *Hurruld*, an' Tummy all av a suddent lit the winder-shade run up near the top. Mudder, sez he, the b'yes have made a big bonfoire in the lot opposite, sez he. An' from where I sat I could see the reflexion av a blazin' tar-barrel in the lookin'-glass over the mantelpace. Jist thin the dure opined behind me, and Mary Ann come in. She saw the reflexion too, an' yelled *Foire!* loike bloody murdher. I turns round to look at her, and she wuz trimblin' wid oxcoitemint, an' as google-eyed as a crab. *Foire!* yells she, an' wid that she grabs a bottle of greenade, an' lets it fly. *Smash!* goes the bottle, an' doon come our twinty-dollar engraving av St. Patrick drivin' the shnakes out of Ireland. *Crash!* goes another, and over comes the clock. Hullup! shouts Tirry, an' got out of his chair, but *whang*, wan of the greeners hits him in the hid an' bursts all over him. Wid that he fell spacheless on the flure, an' I thought he wuz kilt entoirely. Tummy crawled under the sofa, an' I scrouched doon behind the table. All this toime that cross-eyed Mary Ann wuz screeching *Foire! foire!* an' plooggin' them bottles av greenade round the room. *Bang!* wan hits the vase full av wax fruit, that Tirry got at the fair. *Slam!* another puts out the loight, an' clears the lamp off the table, an' she foired the rist af the dozen bottles, roight an' lift, *whang! smash!* round in the dark. The glass wuz crashin', and the greenade stoof was splatterin' an' splashin' an' tricklin' all over the wall an' furnitoor.

Mr. C. Mother o' Moses! It's bushels of glass there is iverywhere. How did it ind, Mrs. Nolan?

Mrs. N. The b'yes over in the lot heard the scraychin' an' crashin', and they smothered their foire, an' come and bust in the front dure, ter see the foight they thought it wuz. Tirry is in bid, wid a poultice on his hid; an' Mary Ann is a-sittin' in the kitchen, paceable as a lamb, lookin' at the ind av her nose fer occypation. She can pack up an' lave this viry day. As

fer that young sphalpeen av a Tummy, he ought ter be licked fer littin' up the winder-shade. Take my advice, Mr. Coogan, an' trust to the foiremin or an ould-fashioned pail av water, an' don't be afther buyin' flasks av cologne-perfume to put out foires wid.

Mr. C. Ye're roight, Mrs. Nolan. That's sinsible information; an' I'll niver be google-eyed, nayther.

LIFE.

RECESS SPEECHES

CHARACTERS

JENNIE JONES,
ALLIE BELL,
FANNIE SMITH,
IDA HARVEY,
ELLA JOHNSTON, *A very small girl.*
HARRY JONES,
FRANK BLAIR,
JOHN THOMPSON,
WILLIE BURNS,
CHARLEY SCOTT.

SCENE.—*A schoolroom. Time, noon recess.*

Harry. Boys and girls, "hear me for my cause, and be silent that you may hear."

Frank. We are all attention.

John. Hear, hear!

Harry. The teacher is gone to dinner, and probably will not return for an hour. I would respectfully suggest that we have some fun—a new kind of fun—to-day.

Willie. I suppose you have got a new idea into your head. Well, open your mouth and proceed to tell us all about it.

Allie. Harry is always thinking up something good. I wish I was such a thinker.

John. So do I. Hurrah for Harry Jones!

Ida. Boys, be still. You make so much noise it is hard for Harry to speak.

Fannie. Harry Jones, proceed.

Harry. There seems to be no opening for a nice young man.

Willie. Proceed, Mr. Jones, and I will attend to the first girl that speaks.

All the Girls. In what way, I'd like to know?

Willie. You would like to know, eh?

All the Girls. Yes.

Willie. Well, if a girl speaks, I'll put a head on her, behind the ear.

John. Cruel Willie!

Fannie (disdainfully). Just like Willie Burns, always using slang phrases.

Ida. Naughty boy!

Frank. Mr. Jones, pay no attention to the useless conversation that is going on around you, but proceed to enlighten us in regard to the new kind of fun of which you have spoken.

Charley. High flown language by Frank Blaïr.

Fannie. Which is something unusual.

Harry. I was merely going to propose that we have a discussion, or some speeches and songs.

Allie. Oh, *we* can't play at that!

Harry. Why not? In these days of women's rights and women's conventions the little girls at school should learn to speak.

Ella. Harry, I tan speat a speech.

Harry. You can! I dare say you will be an honor to your country and an ornament to society. You may proceed with your speech, and the audience will keep silence.

Ella (makes a bow and commences to speak). My name is Ella. I'se on'y a teenty 'ittle dirl, but I dess I tin speat most as well as the big dirls. I likes to go to school and yearn tings out of the 'pellin' book and the 'ittle geog'aphy. My teacher is a dood lady. She

ast me to speat a speech. Some of the big dirls tink it is awful hard to speat speetzes, but I don't tink it is so awful hard. I'd a dood 'eal yather speat speetzes yan to eat tandy. By bruzzer Frankie yikes tandy, but I never tared much for it. It mates one of my tooses ate yite up here in my upper jaw. (*Opening her mouth and pointing to tooth.*) It is awful to have the toot-ate. I'd a dood 'eal yather have the hed ate, or a bad spell of sitness. Yat's all. (*Bows and sits down.*)

Harry. Bravo!

Frank. Excellent!

John. Magnificent!

Willie. Tip top!

Harry. Miss Ella Johnston has opened the exercise nobly. She will be followed by Ida Harvey.

Ida. I can speak the speech I have learned for next Friday.

Harry. That will suit to a T. Let us have it.

Ida (speaks).

You'd scarce expect a girl like me
To walk up here where all can see,
And make a bow, and shout and fret
Like some aggressive suffragette.
You know I'm very small and young,
And do not talk with oily tongue.
Indeed, I now am frightened so
I'd like to make my bow and go.
But while I'm here I'll say to you
That I do know a thing or two.
I've learned to read and sing and spell,
And wash the dishes too, quite well.
I always mind my p's and q's,
And wear substantial leather shoes.
I never yet have learned to lace,
And hope I'll never paint my face.
I do not like the man who smokes,
And tells bad lies and vulgar jokes;

I do not like the man who chews,
And goes around to tell the news.
Such vulgar creatures I despise—
They should be *small* in *ladies'* eyes.
But then there are some girls, you know,
Who'd give their necks to have a beau.
And now, my friends, I've had my say,
And so I'll bow and go away.
(*Bows and sits down.*)

Willie. That's a stunner of a speech. I have no hesitation in saying that that young lady is going to be rather careful in her selection of a beau. She is down on tobacco. Her head is level. That's all.

Jennie. Mr. Burns seems to be a self-appointed critic.

Harry. I think it is right and proper for us to criticize each other. We want an extemporaneous speech now from Frank Blair.

Frank. Oh, dear!

John. Brave boy, ascend the rostrum.

Frank. On what subject shall I speak?

Harry. Let's see. Yes, you may take "Go Ahead" for your subject.

Charley. And—go ahead.

Frank. I think the country is in a dreadful state when a man is compelled to make a speech.

Jennie. A boy, you mean.

Allie. Yes, a boy.

Frank. No, *sir*; I mean a man. As Shakespeare says, "To this point I'll stand."

Willie. Well, you can stand on your head for all I care, but go ahead with your "Go Ahead."

Frank. Don't hurry me. Give me time to collect my scattered thoughts.

Charley. Yes, give him time.

Harry. And while he is thinking, John Thompson may make a speech on "Spelling!"

Fannie. Oh, the idea!

John. Mr. Jones, keep those young ladies quiet. Now, here goes. (*Speaks.*)

This is School No. 7. We are brave boys in No. 7—we are. We had a spelling here not long ago, and the No. 8 boys came over to whip us; but they didn't do it—*no, sir!* They've got some pretty fair spellers over there, too; but they had more than they could do when they came over here to beat us spelling. It is grand to be a good speller, and it looks *awful* to see a letter with bad spelling in it. Cousin Sue—she's a big girl, you know—she had a beau once. He came to see her for quite awhile, and everybody thought they were going to get married. After awhile the beau went away a short distance, and wrote cousin Sue a letter. There was some awful spelling in it, and when cousin Sue read it she came to the conclusion that she would not marry him. That letter made her love fade away. She couldn't and she wouldn't marry a poor speller. Now, if we want to keep out of that kind of trouble—the kind of trouble cousin Sue's beau got into, I mean—we had better learn to spell. There is one thing I can't understand. I don't know how Mr. Webster—that great man who made the big dictionary—ever learned to spell so many words. I think it would be hard enough to learn to spell all the words in the common spelling book. The hardest word I ever tried to spell was *Aldibirontifostiforniostichus*. Can any of you spell it? I tried half a day to spell it and got tangled everytime. Where's my hat? (*Sits down.*)

Harry. Charley Scott is requested to say a few words on the subject of "The Horse."

Charley (rises and speaks). The horse is an animal. He has four long legs and a long tail.

Willie. Ours hasn't. It's a bob-tail.

Harry. Let the speaker proceed, and let there be no interruptions.

Charley. The horse has four long legs and a long tail. The fore feet are stuck on before and the hind

feet are stuck on behind. The tail is also stuck on behind. "I come not here to talk." "You know too well the story of our thralldom." "He is fallen." "We may now pause before that splendid prodigy—"

Willie (laughs). He! he!

John. Have you the audacity to say that the horse is a splendid prodigy?

Charley. Oh, I'm so tired. I think I'll sit down.

Willie (laughs). He! he! He came not here to talk, and he talked but little.

John. How is it with that speaker who wished to collect his senses?

Frank. Thoughts, sir, thoughts. Mr. Jones, I am ready to proceed.

Harry. "Go ahead" is your subject.

Willie. Go on; proceed; continue; push ahead.

Frank (speaks). Go ahead is a good motto. If a boy has a hard lesson to learn he is likely to sit down and give utterance to such expressions as "I can't! I can't!" "It is too hard!" "I couldn't learn that in two weeks!" This isn't right. I am only a little boy, but I know that this is not right. You ought to open your book, commence at the first of the lesson, and go ahead. The harder you study, the easier the lesson will become. That's what Uncle Timothy says, and he ought to know. If you go out to play ball or croquet you don't give up until the game is finished, do you? No, you go ahead. All great men and all wealthy men were go-ahead-a-tive fellows. When I grow up I mean to be a go-ahead-a-tive man. I don't intend to sit down and cry about it if I should lose a few hundred dollars or get my house burned down. No, I intend to go to work and work harder, and in this way make up for my loss. Bob Green is a go-ahead sort of fellow. When—when—I believe I haven't anything more to say.

Willie. You fizzled out, didn't you?

Frank. No, I thought it wouldn't be proper to consume any more time.

Harry. We would now be very glad if Fannie Smith would favor us with a song.

Fannie. I have a cold, and my throat is sore, and I have the toothache, but I'll try.

Willie. There's pluck!

(Fannie sings. After singing for a short time John discovers that the teacher is coming.)

John. The teacher's coming!

Harry. Then this meeting is adjourned.

CURTAIN.

McBRIDE.

LOVE AND DOUGHNUTS

CHARACTERS

OLIVER JONATHAN JACKSON, *A widower.*

JONAH CAPSDELL, *A simple-minded youth.*

FRANK RAY, *A mischievous youth.*

MISS ELLEN ELDER, *An elderly maiden.*

PROPERTIES

Tables, chairs, sofa, easy chairs, stool, etc. Closet, R. U. E. Two plates of doughnuts for Ellen.

SCENE.—*A room, neatly furnished. Closet, R. U. E. Jonah Capsdell and Frank Ray discovered.*

Frank. Jonah, have you never thought of getting married?

Jonah. Oh, yes; yes, sir; I hev thought of that heaps of times. But I don't know whether I could git anybody to hev me or not.

Frank. Pooh! you're too modest. Have you ever asked anybody?

Jonah. No, I hev'n't jest axed anybody to hev me, but I've come awful near to it.

Frank. How near did you come to it?

Jonah. Well, I thought about it a good deal, and I felt like it a heap, and I purty near axed a girl, but somehow I didn't ax.

Frank. Ah, yes, I see; you were afraid to ask.

Jonah. No, I wasn't afraid to ax; no, sir; no, sir-ee; but somehow I didn't quite git it done.

Frank. What was the reason, then, that you did not ask the lady?

Jonah. 'Twasn't a lady; it was jest a girl. I don't care fur tellin' who it was. It was Sally Slope. She's a girl, isn't she?

Frank. Yes; but why was it you didn't ask Sally when you felt so much like doing so?

Jonah. Well, somehow, I don't jest exactly know, but jest about the time I was goin' to ax her there was a flutter about the innermost regions of my heart and I felt sorter queer, and I thought I'd jest better not try too much for fear I would take the palpitulations or the colly wobbus or somethin' or another.

Frank. You shouldn't have given up so easily. Sally's married now and so you've lost her.

Jonah (wiping his eyes). Yes, she's gone, poor dear girl, and I jest thought a heap of her. Do you think it would be goin' ag'in the Scripters to go and shoot the man what took her away from me?

Frank. Yes, that would be awful, cruel, wicked. But you needn't despair; there are hundreds of other girls. You know there is an old maxim which says: "There are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught."

Jonah. There's some whales in the sea, too, isn't there?

Frank. Yes.

Jonah. Well, s'posin' we go a fishin' some day. There's plenty of worms out in our back yard.

Frank. But it is another kind of a fish you want to catch. You want to get married, don't you?

Jonah. Yes, I want to get married awful bad, but if I can't git married I'd like to go a fishin'.

Frank. Well, sir, I think I can get a wife for you.

Jonah. Oh, kin you? I'm so tickled I could a'most fly. Who is the girl? Is she purty?

Frank. No, not beautiful, but she would, no doubt, make an excellent wife.

Jonah. I'd like to hev a purty girl. Sally was a purty girl, but she's gone. (*Sobbing and wiping his eyes.*) It's purty hard to keep from cryin' when I think about Sally.

Frank. Pooh! don't think about Sally; she's gone and there are other girls who are a great deal better.

Jonah. Now, do you raily think so? I thought Sally was purty nice.

Frank. But the one I have in view will suit you a great deal better. She is somewhat older than you, but you will not object to her on that account, I suppose?

Jonah. Oh, no, I don't care if she only makes good pies and doughnuts.

Frank. Well, I can assure you that as a pie and doughnut baker she is equaled by few and excelled by none.

Jonah. That means she's purty good at makin' pies and doughnuts, doesn't it?

Frank. Yes, that's what I mean. She'll suit you exactly. As I said before, she is somewhat older than you, but that is better for you. I think you should marry a lady older than yourself.

Jonah. I thought it was a girl I was goin' to marry.

Frank. Yes, it is. A lady is only another name for a girl.

Jonah. Well, I didn't know. I allers had an idee that a lady was a highfalutin' sort of a woman.

Frank. Don't you want to know who the girl is you are to marry?

Jonah. Yes, I'd like to know, and if you hev got

any of her doughnuts in your pockets I'd like to taste one, jest to see how they do taste.

Frank. I am sorry to say I have none of her doughnuts with me. But you can rest assured that she can't be beaten in the line of making and baking doughnuts.

Jonah. Well, I'm awful glad to hear it, fur I'm jest goin' to purty nigh live on doughnuts when I git married.

Frank. That's right, live on doughnuts and you'll be a happy man.

Jonah. Yes, that's jest what I think about it. Now I s'pose you might tell me the name of the girl.

Frank. Her name is Ellen Elder. She is an aunt of mine. I suppose you have seen her?

Jonah. Is it that old woman what you call Aunt Ellen?

Frank. Yes, that's the one.

Jonah. She can make doughnuts, I s'pose?

Frank. Yes, splendid doughnuts.

Jonah. Well, I would hev thought that she was jest somewhat too old to make sich things. I s'pose she kin make doughnuts, but then there's a difference in doughnuts. Almost anybody kin make some kind of doughnuts, but I allers had an idee that it took a purty girl to make good doughnuts. Your Aunt Ellen, she isn't very purty.

Frank. Oh, she might be said to be passably handsome, but what is beauty when compared with doughnuts?

Jonah. Yes, I know, doughnuts is the principal thing. Well, do you think I kin git her?

Frank. You mustn't be afraid to ask her, anyhow. Don't get frightened as you did when you were going to ask Sally Slope.

Jonah. Oh, I didn't git frightened; no, sir; no, sir-ee. But I jest thought I might take the palpitulations, and then I'd be a goner.

Frank. Well, you must ask Aunt Ellen if you want her. You can't expect a woman to ask you.

Jonah. But if she would only jest ax me you know it would keep me from havin' that flutterin', and I heerd of a man what died once on account of a flutterin' of that kind.

Frank. The fluttering won't hurt you. Don't be a goose and let a good chance slip past you.

Jonah. Oh, yes, I'll ax her; yes, I'll ax her; yes, sir-ee.

Frank. Remember if you lose her you lose an excellent doughnut maker. Come along and I'll show you where to find her.

Jonah. Oh, I'll ax her. Yes, I'm sot upon it. Yes, sir-ee, I'll ax her, colly wobbus, or no colly wobbus; yes, sir-ee. (*Exeunt Frank and Jonah, L.*)

Enter Miss Ellen Elder, R.

Ellen. I s'pose I'm fifty years of age, or p'r'aps more, and I must make one more, yes, one more desperate effort to git married. Why is it that I am obliged to pine in silence and solitude while others are gittin' married every day? Oh, I long for a lovin' companion to cheer me in my droopin' hours! I long fur a companion who can pour consolation into my willin' ears. Yes, I must make one more desperate effort to git married; I must not live to be called an old maid. Oh, I couldn't endure it! But what shall I do? Shill I go out and ax the men sect to take pity on me? Shill I go and ax Oliver Jonathan Jackson to be my lovin' pardner through this world? Oh, I'd love to be united to Oliver Jonathan in the holy bonds of wedlock, but I don't think I could go and ax him. How I wish he would come and ax me! (*Knock at door.*) Goodness gracious! I wonder if it is Oliver Jonathan. (*Opens door.*) How do you do? Come in. I thought it was another man.

Enter Jonah Capsdell, R.

Jonah. I jest thought I'd come in to see you, Aunt Ellen. Yes, sir-ee, I jest thought I'd come in.

Ellen. I'm not your Aunt Ellen, but take a chair and sit down.

Jonah (seating himself). I felt sorter lonesome; yes, sir, that's the way I felt—sorter lonesome, and I thought I'd come in and talk to you fur a spell.

Ellen (aside). Poor fellow! he has no one to talk to and no one to cheer up his lonely life. I will converse with him fur awhile. (*To Jonah.*) And you feel lonesome sometimes, do you?

Jonah. Yes, I do, yes, sir, yes, sir-ee. I hev come in to talk to you fur awhile. Do you like doughnuts?

Ellen. No, I don't care nothin' fur them. They are too rich to agree with my digestification.

Jonah. Oh!

Ellen. I s'pose you don't understand big words.

Jonah. Some big words I don't and some big words I do. You are *rale* sure you don't like doughnuts?

Ellen. I suppose I would like them if they would agree with my digestification.

Jonah. Well, sir, they agree with my bustification tip-top. Yes, sir; yes, sir-ee; they do that. I jest think I could eat doughnuts fur two weeks and never stop. Yes, sir. Oh, doughnuts is so good!

Ellen. I fear you are a gormandizer.

Jonah. No, I'm a blacksmith. I'm tryin' to l'arn the trade with Peter Jenkins, but he says I'll never l'arn nothin'.

Ellen. You wanted to see me, did you?

Jonah. Yes, I jest heerd you could make tip top doughnuts, and I thought I'd come in and see you about it.

Ellen. Who told you I could make good doughnuts?

Jonah. Frank Ray told me.

Ellen. You shouldn't let your mind run on sich groveling and unsatisfactory things. You should think about nobler and greater things.

Jonah. Well, I jest think there can't be anything greater than doughnuts.

Ellen. Do you ever read any?

Jonah. Yes, I read some, but I can't git along very fast. There's some awful hard words in the books these times.

Ellen. Do you like poetry?

Jonah. Well, I raily don't know. I never tasted any, but I'm death on pie.

Ellen. And you like pie, too?

Jonah. Yes, I do; yes, sir; yes, sir-ee. I heerd you was good at makin' pies, too.

Ellen. Have you never thought anything about gittin' married?

Jonah (springing up). Hokey!

Ellen. What's the matter?

Jonah. Oh, I was so startled—so kind of scared—I couldn't help jumpin'. Yes, I hev thought about it; yes, sir; yes, sir-ee.

Ellen. Thought about what?

Jonah (sitting down again). About that what you was a speakin' about. Yes, sir; I hev thought about it; yes, sir.

Ellen. Do you mean gittin' married?

Jonah. Yes, that's it; yes, sir-ee. I hev come in to talk about it, but I was a'most afeared to say anything.

Ellen. Oh, you needn't be afraid to speak to me on that subject. I am always ready to sympathize and talk with anybody that has the great object of matrimony in view.

Jonah (aside). Hokey! I guess that means that she'll hev me.

Ellen. Have you a pardner in view?

Jonah. Hev I a what in which?

Ellen. Have you a girl in view, or in other words, do you think of anyone you would like to git married to?

Jonah. Oh, yes; yes, sir. I hev my eye on one and I guess she'll hev me, but, ah!—eh, I can't jest say what I want to.

Ellen. You need not fear to talk to me. I am your friend, and I have a feller feelin' fur you.

Jonah. Could you git me a few doughnuts jest to make me feel more strong and sorter spruced up like?

Ellen. Certainly. Yes, I'll git you some doughnuts. (*Exit R.*)

Jonah. She's a purty nice girl, but I s'pose she must be middlin' old. I think I'll hev her. Yes, I'll ax her, if the doughnuts is all right. If I had her I think I'd be purty happy, fur I wouldn't do nothin' but eat doughnuts and pies. I'd give up the black-smithin' trade clean and forever. Frank Ray is a nice feller and I'm glad he sent me to see this girl. I s'pect he wanted me to be a relation of his'n. What relation will I be when I git married to this girl? I guess I will be his grandpap, or mebbe I will be his Uncle Bob.

Reënter Ellen Elder, R., with plate of doughnuts.

Ellen (*setting plate on table beside Jonah*). Here are some doughnuts, Jonah, and I made them. When you have smashticated some of them you can judge what I can do in that line.

Jonah. Oh, my, but they do look good!

Ellen. Help yourself, Jonah.

Jonah (*taking up a handful and commencing to eat*). Oh, sich good doughnuts as these is! (*Eating greedily.*) Oh, my, sich doughnuts! I never did taste the like of sich doughnuts afore.

Ellen. You like them then?

Jonah (*still eating*). Yes, sir; yes, sir-eee. These is the smoothest doughnuts I ever got my tongue around. They will make me feel strong and sorter spruced up, and I kin say what I hev to say and not be a bit afeared.

Ellen. You might go on and continner to speak of your arrangements for gittin' married while you are eatin'.

Jonah. Oh, no; no, sir-ee. Let me put down these doughnuts first, these good doughnuts, these smooth doughnuts. And when I hev got that done I will feel

strong, and not a bit trimbly, and I can talk about git-tin' married jest as slick as you please.

Ellen. It always did delight my heart and my conscience and my powers of imagination and all sich things to see a young man enjoyin' doughnuts.

Jonah (still eating). Oh, these is jest sich nice, good, sweet, slick, smooth doughnuts, and the girl which made them must hev been an awful purty girl.

Ellen. I made those doughnuts.

Jonah (eating the last doughnut). Yes, I know, and I think you're a rale purty girl. (*Springing up.*) Oh, hokey! I said that afore I thought.

Ellen. Sit down, Jonah, don't be alarmed. If you think I am a purty girl there is nothin' wrong about sayin' so.

Jonah (seating himself). But I ain't used to sayin' sich things and it sorter skeers me.

Ellen. But if you think I am a fair looking woman it will please me to hear you say so. You might go on now and tell me who you goin' to marry. (*Knock at door.*)

Jonah (springing up). Hokey! Thunder and to-backey! There's somebody comin'. What'll I do?

Ellen (going to closet and opening door). Here, step into this closet and you'll not be seen.

Jonah. But who's a comin'? I'd like to know.

Ellen. I don't know who it is. You will not be disturbed if you keep quiet.

Jonah (going into the closet). I wish you would give me a few more of them doughnuts jest to keep me from feelin' weak and trimbly.

Ellen. No, I haven't time now.

(*Jonah Capsdell goes into the closet, and Ellen Elder closes the door. Another knock at door L. Ellen Elder opens it.*)

Enter Oliver Jonathan Jackson, L.

Oliver. Good-evenin', Miss Elder. I'm glad to see you lookin' so well.

Ellen. And I can say the same to you, Mr. Jackson. (*Places chair.*) Be seated and sit down on a chair, Mr. Jackson. You are quite a stranger.

Oliver. Well, yes, I believe I hev'n't been here fur some time.

Ellen. Why do you absent yourself so long from the presence of your friends, Mr. Jackson?

Oliver. Well, to tell the truth, I hev been mighty busy fur a week or two. You see I hev been buildin' a new shop and a new cow stable, and 'Mewilda Jane Eliza, she's my oldest darter, she's been down with the measles and Sally Ann has had the whoopin' cough purty bad.

Ellen. How tryin' it must be, Mr. Jackson, fur you to be both a pa and a ma to your children.

Oliver. Well, yes, it is a purty tough predicament to be in. Miss Elder, I hev thought—yes, I hev thought, Miss Elder—that is, I think we will hev some rain before long if the wind keeps on blowin' the way it is blowin' now.

Ellen. Yes, there is an appearance of rain, accordin' to the geometry which hangs out on brother William's pizarro. But what were you goin' to say, Mr. Jackson, in regard to your children and their future? You was just sayin' that you had thought some-thin' or another and then you stopped.

Oliver. Well, to tell the truth, Miss Ellen, I think I had better not say anything more at this time.

Ellen (aside). The doughnuts loosened Jonah's tongue; perhaps they would make Mr. Jackson talk better, too, and mebbe they would help him to come to the point. (*To Oliver.*) Excuse my prepositional absence and I will bring some refreshments.

Oliver. Oh, Miss Elder, you needn't go to the trouble.

Ellen. No trouble, Mr. Jackson, no trouble at all. (*Exit, R.*)

Oliver. Well, now, to tell the truth about the matter, that's a purty fine woman. She seems to be perlite

and gentlemanly, and I s'pose I couldn't do better than to ax her to be Mrs. Oliver Jonathan Jackson. I hev an idee that she would take purty good care of the childer and be a reasonable sort of a stepmother. If I could git along without a wife I s'pose it would be better, but I don't see how I can manage to git along. The long and the short of the matter is, I hev too much to do. I can't do the bossin' inside of the house and outside of the house, too. Mewilda Jane Eliza's got the measles purty bad and Sally Ann is hollerin' around with the whoopin' cough. I guess I'll ask Miss Elder to-night. She's a purty fine woman and I s'pose I couldn't do any better.

Reënter Ellen Elder, R., with plate of doughnuts.

Ellen. Mr. Jackson, you mustn't criticize and abominate my doughnuts too much. I didn't git them made quite right—that is, they weren't managed altogether in doughnutical style. (*Handing them to Oliver.*) Take some.

Oliver (taking off one). Oh, I'll bet they are good if you made them. Maria Jane Smith says that as a doughnut baker you can't be excelled.

Ellen (trying to blush). Oh, you men are sich flatterers! I can make tolerable doughnuts, but I missed these dreadfully. Try and worry a few of them down, Mr. Jackson.

Jonah (shouting from the closet). Don't let that big hog eat all them doughnuts.

Oliver (starting up). What's that? I thought I heard a noise.

Ellen. Oh, it was nothin' but my brother's children hollerin' around the house. They are continually shoutin' and gymnasticatin'. Be seated, Mr. Jackson, and do try and worry down some more of these horrid doughnuts.

Oliver (seating himself). Don't call those doughnuts horrid. They are no sich thing. They are the best doughnuts I ever had the pleasure of eatin'.

Ellen. Oh, there you go again! I declare the men sect are all a set of flatterers. (*Aside.*) I must give Jonah some doughnuts or he'll make trouble. (*Takes a few doughnuts unobserved by Oliver, opens the closet door and pitches them in.*) There, you blockhead, eat them and keep quiet. (*Closes closet door.*) Now, Mr. Jackson, help yourself to the doughnuts.

Oliver. Oh, indeed, I couldn't eat another one.

Ellen (*seating herself*). That's because they ain't good. I am very sorry I missed the maneuverin' of them doughnuts. But I feel purty sure that the next lot I make will be all right.

Oliver. Oh, you needn't apologize fur them doughnuts, fur they can't be beat by any woman in the United States of America.

Ellen. Mr. Jackson, I am spasmodically thankful for your good opinion of my horrid and detestable doughnuts, but jest come over next week and see if you don't git somethin' better in the doughnutical line.

Oliver (*placing his chair near Ellen's*). Miss Elder, I hev somethin' to say to-night, and I s'pose you won't care if I sit alongside of you.

Ellen. Oh, no, Mr. Jackson, not at all. There ain't nothin' wrong about that.

Oliver. You know how I am situated, Miss Elder. You know I hev no one to oversee in the house and keep things from goin' to smash and destruction. Me-wilda Jane Eliza is down with the measles and Sally Ann she's a whoopin' round the house with the whoopin' cough. In this dreadful state of confusion it 'pears to me that it devolves upon me to git a wife. I hev thought the matter over for some time and I feel purty sure I couldn't do better than to git you. Now, Miss Elder, I won't make no big speeches about the matter, but I'll jest ax you plain and square, will you marry me?

Ellen (*leaning against him*). Oh, Mr. Jackson—dear Oliver Jonathan, this is so unexpected; it is almost like a clap of thunder in a field of potatoes. Do you really mean it, dear Oliver Jonathan?

Oliver. In course I do. Say the word, Ellen; say that you will hev me.

Ellen. Yes, Oliver Jonathan, I will be thine own. You are a noble man and I will have you.

Jonah (bursting the closet door and dashing out). Murder! Thunder! Hokey and Jerusalem!

Oliver (jumping up and running to the door). Jehosaphat! what's broke?

Ellen. Oh, Oliver Jonathan, you needn't be alarmed. Come back; it is only Jonah.

Oliver (returning). Oh, is it that puddin' head!

Jonah. Oh, you mustn't take her from me. No, sir; no, sir-ee; don't take her from me! I'll jest fight or I'll shoot; yes, sir-ee. She makes smooth doughnuts, and she must be my wife. Frank said she'd hev me.

Oliver. Silence, you dunce.

Ellen. Jonah, go home and don't disturb us, for we are a happy couple.

Jonah. Oh, I can't give you up; no, sir! no, sir-ee. Oh, I would be weak and trimbly all my life if I didn't git to eat your doughnuts! Oh, they are sich good, slick, nice, smooth doughnuts.

Ellen. Jonah, I can't marry you. It's an absurdification to speak of sich a thing. I have a nobler husband in view and a nobler work to perform. Run home, Jonah, and don't make a dunce of yourself.

Jonah (wimpering). Oh, boo hoo! You 'peared to like me a heap till this old feller come. Yes, you did, and I'll go and shoot myself. That's allers the way; I'm jest losin' everybody. First I lost Sally Slope and now I hev lost you! And you could make sich smooth doughnuts—boo hoo! I'll jest go away and die some day, I s'pect, so I will. Oh, dear! .

Oliver. Come, beautiful Ellen, take my arm and we'll retire from this scene.

Ellen. Yes, we'll withdraw. Good-by, Jonah. Go home and don't make a dunce of yourself. (*Exeunt Oliver and Ellen, L.*)

Jonah (crying). Yes, that's the way it is allers. One leaves me and then another leaves me. Yes, sir; yes, sir-ee. And them was sich smooth doughnuts. Oh, I jest s'pect I'll die some day and that'll be good fur the people that leaves me. Yes, it will so; yes, sir; yes, sir-ee. And them was sich smooth doughnuts. Boo hoo! (*Exit.*)

CURTAIN.

McBRIDE.

THE QUACK DOCTOR

A Negro Dialogue

CHARACTERS

POMPEY.

ZEKE.

DR. SNOWBALL.

SCENE.—*A chamber, with a practical door in the flat.
A table and two chairs.*

Pompey dusting the chairs; Zeke looks in at the door.

Zeke. Hi, blackey. (*Closes door again.*)

Pom. Who's dar? Why, dar's nobody! Seems to me dat somebody let his name fall at de door just now.

Zeke (opens door and walks in). Dat you, Pomp? Whar had you been for a week back?

Pom. Been nowhar—nebber had a *weak* back.

Zeke. What, nebber?

Pom. Hardly eber; always as strong as a lion—feel just like a lion dis blessed minute.

Zeke. You just looks like a lion, Pomp.

Pom. Why, did you eber see a lion?

Zeke. See one dis morning down at de stables; you should just hab seen de long ears ob de critter.

Pom. Did he roar, Zeke?

Zeke. Roar? I tink he did; he nearly frighten

me out ob my seven senses? He go "Hee haw, hee haw!"

Pom. Why, dat was a donkey, Zeke.

Zeke. Eh, a donkey?

Pom. Yes.

Zeke. Can't help it, Pomp: you looks just like him for all dat.

Pom. Dat accounts for de strong likeness between you and me, Zeke. Eberybody says we oughter be twins.

Zeke. But I say, Pomp, I habn't seen you for more'n a week.

Pom. No, I habn't leisure to talk to common niggers now; I'se busy nursing de sick.

Zeke. Golly, Pomp! you looks as much like a sick nurse as a lion, only rather more so.

Pom. Well, I's attending ole massa; he's got de mathematics, and he's been lying at de point ob sickness for a week; de disease is bery serious, and all de shell fish in his old body hab got quite extracted.

Zeke. All de what?

Pom. All de shellfish—de *mussels*, you know; I always thought you was a scholar, Zeke.

Zeke. So I oughter be; I went to de night school five times, twice de teacher didn't come, and de fird time he'd got no candle; and after dat I went to de college and cleaned de windows ebery week, so I oughter know something 'bout physicology.

Pom. Dat you should. If you was only as clebber as de great Dr. Snowball dat comes here ebery day from de expensary to see massa, you'd rake de pile, Zeke. He gets hold of massa's arm so—(*imitates a doctor, feeling his pulse and shaking his head*)—and den he says it's free-and-twenty below Nero's and den he look in his mouf to see what he's been eating, and he shake his head and say to me, "Pompey," he say, "take care of your massa, or else he'll nebber recober from one end to de oder, and you may expect ebery minute to be his next." And den he write a

subscription for me to put his feet in hot water and salt, and gib him some brandy and gruel ebery ten minutes.

Zeke. Did you gib it him?

Pom. Well, I got a lily bit mixed up wid de medicine and I put his feet into de gruel, and gib him some hot water and salt ebery ten minutes.

Zeke. And what became of de brandy, Pomp?

Pom. I 'spects I must hab drunk it myself. I's berry much giben to does absence of mind fits.

Zeke. I'm 'fraid your absence ob mind wouldn't hab drunk de hot water and salt, eh, Pomp?

Pom. No, Zeke, my fits don't extend dat far.

Dr. Snow. (outside). Don't gib yourself any more trouble, I know de way.

Pom. Here's de doctor; I'll go and fetch massa's coffee—but first I'll act like de worshipers ob old, and prostrate myself at de feet ob a *jenny ass!* *(He lies down at the door, which opens, and Dr. Snowball is seen entering backwards, as if bowing to someone outside. He falls over Pompey, who then makes his exit.)*

Dr. Snow (rising, pulls off his spectacles, and looks about him). Dear me, how did I fall ober de carpet? *(Lays his cane upon the table.)*

Zeke. I spects it's because you'd no eyes behind you. People dat walk backwards in dis life neber see de 'tumblin' blocks dat lie in de way.

Dr. Snow. (aside). Who's dis, I wonder—anoder doctor! but it's no matter, I'll hab no ribals in my path. I'm determined to make all de money myself. It's de duty of ebery profeshonal man to get rich, for de poor man's advice is neber taken, let it be eber so wise. Let a man once frow a five dollar gold piece down on de table, and eberybody can hear de ring ob his money, but if he only frows a cent nobody can hear de sound, so I won't hab any oppersition in my profeshonal practice. *(Turns to Zeke.)* Now, sir, who are you? I've seen you somewhere, haben't I?

Zeke. Berry likely, I generally goes dar.

Dr. Snow. Hab you eber traveled?

Zeke. Berry often, when I's been on a journey.

Dr. Snow. How long hab you been here?

Zeke. 'Bout five feet six.

Dr. Snow. Where hab you come from?

Zeke. Home.

Dr. Snow. Where's dat?

Zeke. Whar I started from.

Dr. Snow. What might your name be—?

Zeke. I might be Dr. Snowball, but it isn't.

Dr. Snow. So you know me, do you?

Zeke. I spects you's de great Doctor Snowball from de suspensary, dat obercomes all de simpletums of human nature, howeber differcult dey are.

Dr. Snow. Yes, sir, I am the great Dr. Snowball, and all symptoms are alike to me. A physical difficulty to me is impossible.

Zeke. Can you substract teef?

Dr. Snow. (*aside*). Aha! dis is anoder patient?

(*To Zeke.*) Yes, sir, I can extract teeth.

Zeke. From what sort of moufs?

Dr. Snow. All mouths are de same to me.

Zeke. Den substract one from de mouf ob de Mississippi.

Dr. Snow. (*takes his cane up*). What do you mean by dat? (*Shakes it at him.*)

Zeke (*retreats behind table*). You cures de headache, don't you?

Dr. Snow. Yes, sir, promptly.

Zeke. In any kinds ob heads, I s'pose?

Dr. Snow. Certainly.

Zeke. Den suppose you tries de head ob navigation.

(*Dr. Snowball pursues Zeke with his cane, who dodges him round the table.*)

Zeke. And you sets arms and legs, doesn't you?

Dr. Snow. Well, sir, what of dat?

Zeke. Can you set an arm ob de sea, or de leg ob

a triangle? And I s'pose you cures warts on de hands, and corns and bunions on de feet?

Dr. Snow. I do, sir.

Zeke. You can cure warts on de hands ob a clock den, and take a bunion off de foot ob a hill?

Dr. Snow. I'll show you wedder I can or not. (*Rushes after him again 'round table, knocking over both the chairs.*) I'll blister your side for you, if I can only catch you.

Zeke. Dar's one side you can't blister.

Dr. Snow. Which is dat?

Zeke. De sea side, and dar's one back you'd be puzzled to put a plaster on.

Dr. Snow. I'd like to put one on yours.

Zeke. You can't put one on a hedgehog's!

Dr. Snow. You rascal! (*Overturns table to get at him. Zeke retreats towards the door.*) I can see a rascal in your face.

Zeke. I nebber knew before my face was a looking glass. (*As he is close to the door, Dr. Snowball makes a blow at him with his cane, Zeke ducks, and the blow alights upon the breakfast tray which Pompey is just bringing in, Zeke darts out at the door.*)

Pom. Hallo, dar! Dar's a fall in provisions at last. Massa's been on grumblin' at de price for a long time. Hadn't you better go in and see massa, sir?

Dr. Snow. How is he, did he follow my prescription?

Pom. No, sir, he didn't, or else he'd be roasted. He frew it into de fire.

Dr. Snow. What for?

Pom. He didn't dike de hot water and salt.

Dr. Snow. Ha, I shall hab to diet him, dat's all. (*Exit Dr. Snowball.*)

Pom. Dieting's just a race between physic and starvation, to see which can kill first; when you die you lib on nuffin, and when you diet you've nuffin to live on.

Enter Zeke at door.

Zeke. Whar's de doctor, Pomp?

Pom. He's gone to diet massa.

Zeke. Ha, dar's nuffin like diet, if it's good diet; dar was an old nigger down at Salwannah used to gib wonderful advice about diet. He told us what we mustn't hab to eat, and what was strange, eberybody took dat old nigger's advice.

Pom. What did he advise, Zeke?

Zeke. He said we mustn't eat de shovel or de poker or de tongs, because dey was bery hard ob digestion; and we mustn't eat de bellows, because dey was inclined to be windy; and bricks and mortar was too binding. Lead, he tol us, was too heavy for food, and drinking petroleum was apt to produce too sudden a change in de system.

Pom. Golly, dat was a clebber nigger, Zeke.

Zeke. You're 'bout right dar, Pomp. But I say, Pomp, s'pose your old massa die, what's you going to do?

Pom. I's gwine to pray for him, Zeke.

Zeke. Wal now, dat's berry foolish ob you, Pomp?

Pom. What for? Don't you go to church, Zeke?

Zeke. Oh, yes, I go dar a good deal, considerable—berry near ebery Sunday—dat is, occasionally, now and den, a little, not much, if any.

Pom. Den why not pray for old massa, Zeke?

Zeke. What, after he's dead; what's de use ob praying for a man after he's dead?

Pom. But he's such a good massa, Zeke, and you knows we oughter pray sometimes.

Zeke. Den I'd pray for anoder like him.

Pom. Wouldn't you be 'fraid ob his ghost, Zeke?

Zeke. No. I don't tink ghosts such disagreeable people as dey are s'posed to be. I wish I could be a ghost, Pomp.

Pom. Why, what's de special benefit ob being a ghost?

ZEKE. Why, dey've neber no bills to pay, and dey's

nebber in debt, Pomp. You nebber heard ob anybody habing any claim against one ob those people. Dey nebber hab to buy vittles or drink, and dere shirts and boots nebber wears out, and dere clothes are nebber shabby. Dey are de only independent people in de world, Pomp, and I wish I was one.

Enter Dr. Snowball.

Dr. Snow. Here you, Pompey, get your massa some hen fruit, at once.

Pom. What sort of fruit?

Dr. Snow. Hen fruit.

Pom. Nebber heard ob it. Whar does it grow?

Dr. Snow. It doesn't grow, you ignorant nigger. I mean eggs.

Pom. Oh, you mean eggs, den why didn't you say so?

Dr. Snow. You must boil dem three minutes.

Pom. Oh, free minutes; what, by de clock?

Dr. Snow. Yes.

Pom. Den I can't.

Dr. Snow. Why can't you?

Pom. 'Cause de clock's half an hour too fast.

Dr. Snow. What does dat matter, you ass? And I've left a bottle ob my great Kerfoozlem medicine, dat licks all creation, on de table.

Zeke. Is dat berry strong stuff, doctor?

Dr. Snow. Strong? Dat's not de word for it—it's mighty. It cures anything; sore eyes, baldness, pains in de back, bad tempers, toofache or tight boots. It is a splendid hair wash, a powerful vermin killer, an excellent sauce, a first-rate pickle, and a good substitute for turpentine, and it will remove all incumbances whatsoever.

Zeke. Yes, I heard ob it de odder day. It did Bob Crow a berry great service last week.

Dr. Snow. I'm proud ob your testimony, sar. How did it operate on him?

Zeke. It removed his mudder-in-law in two doses.

Dr. Snow. Dere must be a mistake about dat.

Zeke. Bob thought so. He thought her constertution would stand anyfing, he'd tried beetle poison, aqua *forty*, I don't know whether it wasn't aqua *fifty* or not, and seberal odder soofing lickers ob dat kind, and she was proof against dem all; but two doses ob your Kerfoozlem did de work at once. I believe it would hab cured old uncle Peter himself, dat was killed last fall.

Dr. Snow. How was he killed?

Zeke. Wal, he'd got up in his sleep one night and tried to get out of de window, and de window sash fell down on his neck and broke his neck, and den he fell out and his head caught de shutter and killed him, and he fell into de rain-butt and was drowned, and de butt tossed ober and he rolled into de gutter and dar he was froze to deff, and den dey took him to de station-house and got twelve fat jurymen to come and sit on him, and dat squashed all de life out of him.

Dr. Snow. Dat's a wonderful story, I shall hab to wash dat down. Pompey, fetch me a glass of wine from your massa's table.

Pom. Yes, sah. (*Aside.*) Golly, how I'll fix him! (*Exit Pompey.*)

Dr. Snow. (*to Zeke*). Now, sir, let me persuade you to try one bottle of my wonderful Kerfoozlem.

Zeke. Thank you, doctor, but I've got no mudder-in-law. Will it do for washing licker?

Dr. Snow. No linen is properly washed without it.

Zeke. Will it make good furniture polish?

Dr. Snow. Makes old mahogany into new. Ah, here's de wine.

Enter Pompey with glass on tray. Dr. Snowball takes the glass and drinks, then drops the glass.

Pom. What's de matter?

Dr. Snow. What's dis you've given me?

Pom. De wine, doctor, out ob de bottle on massa's table.

Dr. Snow. Which table?

Pom. De lily table in corner.

Dr. Snow. Dat's where I put de Kerfoozlem, I'm poisoned! a chair, quick! *(They each run for a chair and bring them together in the center. As the doctor is sitting down, they each take one of them away and sit upon them, the doctor coming to the ground between them.)*

Zeke. Why, Pomp, what hab you taken the doctor's chair for?

Pom. You took it, I only took the one I brought for myself.

Dr. Snow. You two rascals! *(They laugh at him.)* What are you laughing at, stretching your mouths till dey are as large almost as your two heads? *(Threatens them with his cane.)*

Zeke. I've seen somefing dat has a mouf larger dan its head.

Dr. Snow. Eh, what, do you want to make a fool ob me?

Zeke. No, sah, but it's true for all dat.

Dr. Snow. Where can dere be anything dat has a mouf larger dan its head?

Zeke. De mouf ob a river, doctor, is berry much larger dan its head.

Pom. So it is, Zeke, I 'member once swimming across the mouf ob a river when I was a lily boy.

Dr. Snow. Well, I suppose you was a good swimmer.

Pom. No, dat's de best ob it, I couldn't swim at all. Why I swum in a boat.

Dr. Snow. Den de boat swum, not you.

Pom. Oh, yes, I must be swimming wid de boat, I couldn't walk ober, you know. But when I was getting out ob de boat, I was taken wid a queer state of feeling, and I stepped into de water.

Zeke. And you couldn't swim; wasn't you drowned?

Pom. Oh, no, I frew out my arms, in dis way. *(Throws out both his arms, the tray which he has in his hand comes in contact with Dr. Snowball's face.)*

Dr. Snow. The deuce!

Zeke. No, doctor, dat wasn't de deuce, it was de tray dat won dat trick, de tray was in Pomp's hand.

Dr. Snow. And de cane is in mine, you rascals!
(*Comic business—he pursues them with the cane, and finally chases them out of the room.*)

CURTAIN.

THE OPENING SPEECH

CHARACTERS

FRANK CLAYTON.

SAMMY LONG.

HARRY THOMPSON.

JOHNNY WILSON.

TOMMY WATKINS.

WILLIE BROWN.

SCENE.—*A stage. Curtain rises, and Frank Clayton comes forward and speaks.*

Frank. Ladies and gentlemen: Our performances are now about to commence. We have spent some time in preparing for this exhibition, and we hope you will be pleased with all the performances that may be given. You well know that we have not had much practice in giving school exhibitions, and if you see any errors, we hope you will kindly forgive and overlook. We will endeavor to give our recitations correctly, and act our parts truthfully, and we ask you to—and we ask you to—and—and—and we ask that—that—that—

Enter Harry Thompson. He comes in front of Frank and commences to speak.

Did you ever hear of Jehosophat Boggs,
A dealer and raiser of all sorts of dogs?
No? Then I'll endeavor in doggerel verse
To just the main points of the story rehearse.
Boggs had a good wife—

Frank (speaking in a loud whisper). Harry, what did you come out here for? I'm not through the introductory speech yet.

Harry (turns half way round, puts his hand to his mouth, as if to keep the audience from hearing, and speaks in a loud whisper). I know you weren't through, but you stuck, and I thought I had better come on. You know my recitation is second on the programme, and I didn't want to have a bungle right at the commencement of the exhibition.

Frank. Go back to your place, you little rascal, and don't interrupt me again. I'm going to speak my piece.

Harry (with his hand up to hide his mouth as before). Oh, you're stuck and you'd better retire.

(Turns to audience, and continues to speak his piece.)

Boggs had a good wife, the joy of his life,
There was nothing between them inclining to strife.
Except her dear J.'s dogmatic employment;
And that, she averred, did mar her enjoyment.

Frank (whispering as before). I say, Harry, get from before me and let me speak my piece.

Harry (turns, puts up his hand, and whispers as before). Oh, you keep shady until I get through.
(Turns to audience and speaks.)

She often had begged him to sell off his dogs,
And instead to raise turkey, spring chickens or hogs.
She made him half promise at no distant day
He would sell the whole lot, not excepting old Tray;
And as good luck would have it,—

Frank (taking Harry by the collar and pulling him back). I tell you to get out of this until I have spoken my piece.

Harry. I won't. Let me alone, I say. You have stuck fast, and do you want to spoil the exhibition? Didn't you know enough to keep off the stage until I had spoken my piece?

Frank (still holding him by the collar). It is you that is spoiling the exhibition. (*Leads him off the stage.*)

Harry (speaking loudly as he goes out). I call this an outrage.

Frank (returning to his place and commencing to speak). Ladies and gentlemen, my speech has been interrupted, and I will commence again. Our performances are now about to commence. We have spent some time in preparing for this exhibition, and we hope you will be pleased with all the performances that may be given. You know that we have not had much practice in giving school exhibitions, and if you see any errors, we hope you will kindly forgive and overlook. We will endeavor to give our recitations correctly, and act our parts truthfully, and we ask you to—to—and we ask you to—and act our parts truthfully, and we ask you to—and we ask you to—(*in a lower tone*). I've forgotten it again; isn't that too bad? (*Speaking as before.*) And we ask you to—to—to—

Enter Tommy Watkins. He comes in front of Frank, and commences to speak "The Ghost."

'Tis about twenty years since Abel Law,
A short, round favored, merry
Old soldier of the Revolutionary
War,
Was wedded to a most abominable
Shrew.
The temper, sir, of Shakespeare's Catharine
Could no more be compared with hers
Than mine
- With Lucifer's.

Frank (in a loud whisper). Tommy Watkins, get from before me. Don't you see I'm speaking? I don't want to be interrupted—I want to finish my speech.

Tommy (facing the audience and speaking in the same tone as when reciting his speech). Oh, you'd better quit! You've stuck twice, now, and if you don't go off the stage the audience will become disgusted.

Sammy Long (seated in the audience). The people are disgusted now with that boy's opening speech. He'd better go home, memorize it, and speak it some time next year.

Tommy. There! You hear what they say out there in the audience. They are disgusted, and they think you had better leave the stage.

Frank. Oh, that's nobody but Sammy Long, and he is displeased because we didn't invite him to take part in the exhibition.

Tommy. Well, I'll go ahead and speak my piece while you are trying to think up the words you have forgotten.

Her eyes were like a weasel's; she had a harsh
Face, like a cranberry marsh,
All spread with spots of white and red;
Hair of the color of a wisp of straw,
And a disposition like a cross-cut saw.
The appellation of this lovely dame
Was Nancy; don't forget the name.

Frank. Stop, Tommy; I can finish my speech now.

Tommy. So can I. (*Continues his recitation.*)

Her brother David was a tall,
Good-looking chap, and that was all;
One of your great big nothings, as they say
Out in Rhode Island, picking up old jokes
And cracking them on other folks.
Well, David undertook one night to play

The Ghost, and frighten Abel, who,
He knew,
Would be returning from a journey through
A grove of forest wood
That stood
Below
The house some distance—half a mile or so.

With a long taper
Cap of white paper,
Just made to cover
A wig, nearly as large over
As a corn-basket, and a sheet
With both ends made to meet
Across his breast
(The way in which ghosts are always dressed),
He took
His station near
A huge oak-tree,
Whence he could overlook
The road and see
Whatever might appear.

It happened that about an hour before, friend Abel
Had left the table
Of an inn, where he had made a halt,
With horse and wagon,
To taste a flagon
Of malt
Liquor, and so forth, which, being done,
He went on,
Caring no more for twenty ghosts
Than if they had been so many posts.

David was nearly tired of waiting;
His patience was abating;
At length, he heard the careless tones
Of his kinsman's voice,
And then the noise

Of wagon wheels among the stones.
Abel was quite elated, and was roaring
With all his might, and pouring
Out, in great confusion,
Scraps of old songs made in "the Revolution."

His head was full of Bunker Hill and Trenton;
And jovially he went on,
Scaring the whip-po'-wills among the trees
With rhymes like these:

(*Sings. Air: "Yankee Doodle."*)

"See the Yankees
Leave the hill,
With baggernetts declining,
With lopped-down hats
And rusty guns,
And leather aprons shining.

"See the Yankees—Whoa! Why, what is that?"
Said Abel, staring like a cat,
As slowly on the fearful figure strode
Into the middle of the road.

"My conscience! what a suit of clothes!
Some crazy fellow, I suppose.
Hallo! friend, what's your name? by the powers
of gin,
That's a strange dress to travel in."
"Be silent, Abel; for now I have come
To read your doom;
Then hearken, while your fate I now declare.
I am a spirit—" "I suppose you are;
But you'll not hurt me, and I'll tell you why:
Here is a fact which you cannot deny;—
All spirits must be either good
Or bad—that's understood—
And be you good or evil, I am sure
That I'm secure.

If a good spirit, I am safe. If evil—
And I don't know but you may be the devil—
If that's the case, you'll recollect, I fancy,
That I am married to your sister Nancy!"

(*Bows and turns to go off. To Frank.*) Now, Frank, you can go ahead again until you come to the sticking place. I hope that, during the time I have generously given you by speaking my piece, you have been collecting your scattered senses, and will now be able to finish what you began. (*Exit Tommy.*)

Frank. Ladies and gentlemen, I am not at all pleased with this way of doing business. I think these boys have not treated me with proper respect. I was selected to give the opening or introductory address, and you see how it has been done.

Sammy (in the audience). We didn't see very much of it. Don't you think it would be well enough for you to retire and memorize your speech?

Frank. You boys out there had better keep silent and not create a disturbance. There is an officer in the house.

Enter Willie Brown. He comes before Frank and commences to speak.

"'Twas night! The stars were shrouded in a veil of mist; a clouded canopy o'erhung the world; the vivid lightnings flashed and shook their fiery darts upon the earth—"

Frank (speaking out). I say, Willie Brown, what did you come here for? I haven't finished the opening speech yet.

Willie. What's the use of having an opening speech now? The exhibition is half over. (*Continues his speech.*)

"The deep-toned thunder rolled along the vaulted sky; the elements were in wild commotion; the storm-spirit howled in the air; the winds whistled; the hail-stones fell like leaden balls; the huge undulations of

the ocean dashed upon the rock-bound shore; and torrents leaped from mountain tops; when the murderer sprang from his sleepless couch with vengeance on his brow—murder in his heart—and the fell instrument of destruction in his hand.”

Frank. Stop, I say. What kind of an exhibition will this be without an introductory speech? Stop, I say. We will be the laughing stock of the country if we don't open our exhibition with an introductory speech.

Johnny (in the audience). Oh, nobody cares for the introductory speech. Let the speech go and give us some dialogues and songs.

Willie. No dialogues and songs until I have finished my speech. This is my place on the programme. *(Continues his speech. Frank comes and stands near him and they both speak at the same time, Willie giving the concluding portion of his speech and Frank commencing at the first of his Opening Speech and going as far as he had gone before. Willie should finish just before Frank commences to stammer.)*

“The storm increased; the lightnings flashed with brighter glare; the thunder growled with deeper energy; the winds whistled with a wilder fury; the confusion of the hour was congenial to his soul, and the stormy passions which raged in his bosom. He clenched his weapon with a sterner grasp. A demoniac smile gathered on his lip; he grated his teeth; raised his arm; sprang with a yell of triumph upon his victim, and relentlessly killed—a mosquito!” *(Bows and turns to go off. To Frank.)* Stuck again, my boy. If we had waited for the opening speech we would not have got our exhibition opened for a week or ten days. *(Exit Willie.)*

Enter Harry Thompson. He comes forward and speaks.

Our parts are performed and our speeches are ended,
We are monarchs and courtiers and heroes no more;

To a much humbler station again we've descended,
And are now but the school-boys you've known us
before.

Farewell then our greatness—'tis gone like a dream,
'Tis gone—but remembrance will often retrace
The indulgent applause which rewarded each theme,
And the heart-cheering smiles that enlivened each
face.

We thank you! Our gratitude words cannot tell,
But deeply we feel it—to you it belongs;
With heartfelt emotion we bid you farewell,
And our feelings now thank you much more than our
tongues.

We will strive to improve, since applauses thus cheer us,
That our juvenile efforts may gain your kind looks;
And we hope to convince you, the next time you hear us,
That praise has but sharpened our relish for books.

(*Bows and turns to go off.*) I have spoken the valedictory and the exhibition is over. Ring down the curtain.

Frank (*excitedly*). Stop! Hold! Don't! I haven't finished my speech yet.

Johnny (*in the audience*). You've given us enough for the present. You can finish it out next Christmas.

Harry. Ring down the curtain.

Frank. Stop! Don't! Don't! I want to speak my piece. (*A bell is rung and the curtain falls.*)

Frank (*drawing the curtain aside and coming out*). Here's a go! How are we going to get along without an Opening Speech? Well, anyhow, if I can't get through with that, I know a piece I *can* speak without breaking down, and here goes; I'll show you, and these boys, that I'm not to be put down as a dunce. (*Speaks.*)

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold:—
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
“What writest thou?”—The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, “The names of those who love the Lord.”
“And is mine one?” said Abou. “Nay, not so,”
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still; and said, “I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.”

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had
blessed,
And lo, Ben Adhem’s name led all the rest.

(Bows and retires.)

McBRIDE.

END

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